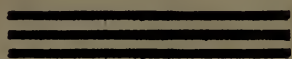


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THE HEART OF THINGS



BY
H.M.WALKER





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THE HEART OF THINGS

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BY
H. M. WALKER

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H. M. WALKER

We grow through expression—and if you know things, there is a strong desire to express them. It is Nature's way of deepening our impressions—this thing of recounting them. And, happy, indeed, are you if you know a soul with whom you can converse at your best.—Elbert Hubbard.

INTRODUCTION

"All is eligible to All,
All is for individuals, all is for you,
No condition is prohibited, not God's or any."
—Walt Whitman.



WHEN Greek meets Greek"—look out!

When Love meets Love, look in!

The human being does not live who is not susceptible to the touch of Love. It makes no difference who the man or woman, nor how calloused the heart has grown in this fight for bread, and the mad rush for place, and pelf and power, if Love will place her hand upon the arm, and whisper the word of sympathy into the hardened ear, and to the heart-sick soul, the whole complexion of life will change and a responsive chord, long dead, shall be awakened. Sympathy, the world needs more than salvation. The man whose life has been unprofitable; whose hopes have not been realized; whose faith in his fellows has been shaken, and who feels that emptiness of life which brings a longing to the heart for fellowship; to him Love can go and he will listen.

¶ There are times in the experience of us all when we labor seemingly in vain; when companions desert us

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and sympathy flows ever in the opposite direction. At such times we grope as in the dark for a beam of light to lighten our way, and it does not come. We do not know which way to turn, and the cry of the heart is for sympathy! Sympathy! Love!

In writing this book the writer has sought to avoid all superfluity of expression and has given in the simplest words at his command the thoughts that have come in those quiet moments with Hank. With no thought of creating a sensation, and no desire to advance some fine theory, but just to get close to your heart, and, as brother to brother, reason with you about those little things that cling to us and cause us pain and sometimes joy.

¶ I introduce to you my closest friend, to whom the book is dedicated. A quaint character is he; so sober and subdued, and yet as real to me as the physical presence of any reader of these lines. He lives as you and I live; feeling with us the oozing of life's wine, and noting the falling of life's leaves from the tree we call Ourselves. And yet, never a frown upon his brow, nor a ruffle in his spirits. To my friend, Hank Reklaw, I introduce you. And Hank is as much your friend as mine; he lives his life as near you as to me. He is that Other Self.

No incident in my life is too insignificant for him to note; no sorrow comes that he is not present to give comfort, and no joy that he does not share. To him this work is dedicated, because it is his by right of authorship. ¶ I give back to him his own.

What inspiration you draw from it, if any, credit to

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his account. And if, perchance, expression is given to thoughts that conflict with those of every-day, draw your chair closer to his, and reason it out with him. Speaking from personal experience, I always have found Hank a reasonable fellow. He will give way to you many times, just to tease. Oft in my life he has borne me "glad tidings" wrapped closely in deep folds of crepe, and much agony has been mine while he calmly stood without, thumping heavily at my soul's door with an idea that I did not like.

Hank is the other half of me, as he is the other half of you. I know him well—so well that he can say many things to me I would not bear from another. Sometimes he speaks to me—I know not why—and were it not for the love I know he has for me, the sting of his words would break the heart. He speaks on, and all the while my soul is resentful; but as he reasons to me of Life and Light and Love, and carries me away in the silent hours of my life's night, I feel the very impulses that you feel; my thoughts become your thoughts, my love your love. We are One in all but the temple of flesh with which the soul is clothed, and behind which we hide that Other Self.

And so, in drawing close to Hank's heart, I draw close to yours. Arm-in-arm we see things together, if not alike. There is but one Real Self. To me that Real Self is Hank Reklaw. You may know him by another name, but his thoughts will be the same, for he is the same. This temporal body of flesh and blood and bone and tissue may be scattered to the winds like the bursting of a soap bubble, but Hank shall live

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on because he is the Real. In him is the essence of Truth. We are but pigmies in his hands—shadows of the Real.

When he talks to me he tells me what the world has ever known—what you know—what others know. His character is more real than the transitory person the world knows as you and I—here today, gone tomorrow—but that Other Self—the One Real Self of all, of which we reflect only a part—lives on and on, and shall ever live.

To that Other Self of You, I dedicate this book.

H. M. W.

Los Angeles, Cal., April 22, 1906.

I BELIEVE that All came from God, All is God, and All will return to God. What our position is before death, it will be after death. If we are given over to greed, avarice and hatred in this city, our companions will be companions of greed, avarice and hatred in that city. We get what we give here, and we will get what we give there. Hate, and hate will return to you; love, and love will come back to you; trust others, and others will trust you; mistrust others, and you will be mistrusted; see none of God in your fellow men, and your fellow men will see none of God in you.

SOUL STARVATION

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."



IT was in the early morning; the sun was just climbing the eastern hills and its bright, warm rays shot over the rugged mountain peaks down into the valley. Out in the meadow the birds sang their morning praise, anthem-wise; the dew sparkled on the green leaves, and all was happiness in Nature's home.

As I sat dreaming, a man came along the road and sat in the shade near me. He was an old man—sore tried. He did not hear the singing birds, because he did not have them in his heart; did not feel the warmth of the sunshine, although he was hot; did not see the sparkling dew-drop, the azure sky, the green meadows, nor the grand, rugged hills standing, sentinel-like, over all. He only saw what was reflected from within his own sore heart, and as he looked he lamented. ¶ Life to him was incessant hardship. He had toiled as few men had ever toiled; he had saved, and skimped and squeezed, and by this means had amassed a fortune. He no longer

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had to watch the pennies—he did not want to see them. ¶ He wanted wealth in his earlier days. Now he had it. ¶ But there was something he did not have, which he would give the world to possess. He could not give expression to his soul. It had shrivelled up. ¶ The saucy birds could sing—they were happy—while he, with wealth untold, was miserable. So bent on getting riches he had been that he did not take time to develop the ability to be happy. Now, with all his wealth he could not buy it. He had wealth without the capacity to enjoy it. He tried to have a good time, but he did not know how. He spent his money upon himself. He did not know another on whom to lavish it. He did not love and could not serve. ¶ You see, dear heart, the happiness that lasts—the joy that stays with you—is not for sale; nor can it be acquired in an atmosphere of luxury and plenty. The old man could buy temporal comforts and indulgences, but content and peace could not be purchased. ¶ With wealth, as with poverty, there must come wisdom, else there can be no happiness. And Wisdom had not come to the old man because he had not sought her. Satisfied with wealth, he got no more. Now he searched the wide world for a touch from the hand of Love. ¶ He turned away, and as he plodded on, I heard him say: “Not here, not here.”

○ HELL! I don't want to be “educated.” Just a friend or two who will love me for what I am.

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FOLLOWING NATURE'S LEAD

"I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew,
Than one of these same meter ballad-mongers,"—Shakespeare.

NATURE always follows the line of least resistance. Herein lies the secret of all success. The man who wants to succeed in any calling of life would be very foolish if he made himself obnoxious to all he came in contact with. He would meet with resistance at once, and in doing so would challenge Nature to enter the arena against him. And when a man does that, he may as well give up, for Nature will not be antagonized: and she never loses a contest. Get on the side of Nature and more than half the fight is won. Study with what ease she does things. How carefully it all is planned, and how quietly and surely every plan is carried out.

When a person desires to overcome some evil habit, or to get away from a debilitating influence, if he is wise, he will not place himself where the temptation will get hold of him. He will adopt the rational way, and withdraw to a place where temptation is less powerful. He will seek the line of least resistance. Or he will overcome temptation by giving way to it.

In seeking the best for himself and other, the wise man will do as Nature does. He will not strive where the point of resistance is greatest, but will find the weaker point and camp there. If he be weak, he will again follow the example of Nature, and

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let the good things come to him, instead of sacrificing his life by striving against the more powerful elements for them.

If a man desires the greatest success, he will not seek the companionship of the unsuccessful, but will get in touch with the successful. In so doing, he will work in harmony with Nature, and thereby find what he most needs.

It used to be the popular belief that "competition is the life of trade," and every man thought his only chance of success rested in his ability to cope with and overcome his neighbor. ¶ We are just closing a very competitive period in the world's history—perhaps the greatest known. "As individuals we stand, united we fall," has been the watchword. But a period of greater success is dawning—the period of co-operation. The great trusts have shown what can be done in the commercial world. ¶ Greater things are yet to be developed in the social world.

The power of thought is so mighty when properly understood and applied, that men are uniting as never before in a fraternal way in their efforts to better their own condition and the condition of humanity. ¶ Long, long ago, when the Man of Nazareth attempted to point the Jewish church away from its attitude of holiness to one of Simple Truth and Brotherly Love, it turned upon him and he was crucified for his pains. Since those days the church has changed some for the better, because the people have grown more enlightened, but even yet, it is far away from the Simple Life. And while it remains away the demand

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for co-operation among men will continue to grow, and there will be the harmonizing of thought and action for man's soul betterment outside of what we know as religious lines. Men will draw closer together, and will work out their own salvation and the salvation of the world, in a natural way.

The church has failed to accomplish its prime object because it would approach man at the point of greatest resistance. The man Jesus pointed out this defect, and was accused of eating with publicans and sinners; breaking the laws of the Sabbath; blasphemy, and all manner of heresy. But, what Christ attempted to show the church was this: that there is a better way to approach a man than to say to him: "Here, sir, you are damned: if you would be saved, you must believe so-and-so." He saw the man from within and knew he was not so black as orthodoxy painted him, and he went to that man on the common footing of Brotherly Love and showed him wherein custom and vice had led him wrong. That was a long time ago, but it was only yesterday that man realized the purpose of his mission.

Our fraternal societies and our Success clubs are doing their work in a similar way. They teach men co-operation in thought and action, and point them to the highest ideals of Harmony and Health, Happiness and Love.

"Divided we stand; united we fall" was the old motto. "United we stand; divided we fall" is the new. And so says Nature.

SOUL UNFOLDMENT

"Man makes a death, which Nature never made."—Edward Young.



HAT is there back of this physical death that causes men to so fear it? Death, when understood, is the most natural thing in the universe—quite as natural as life itself, and as necessary, if there is to be growth. In our present state of mind and body, the soul is so bound to a narrow, misshapen life that, at best, it cannot reach far beyond the confines of Avarice, against the walls of which it beats its wings like an imprisoned eagle, which, looking high unto the scraggy peaks, longs to soar above them, amid the clouds.

Some day, when the sting of Death is drawn, and all religious societies become more concerned about the now than the afterwhile, the world will forget all about what might be on the other side, and when the time comes for man to make the dip into the unknown, he will think as little about it as he does of changing his clothing. And what is now an occasion for weeping, will have been changed into one of laughing. As Omar puts it:

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Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside
And, naked on the Air of Heaven ride;
Were it not a shame—were it not a shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

Where does man get his present conception of Death? It is so hateful, and so unworthy the highest type of animal! The fowls of the air; the beasts of the field and those inhabiting the ocean deep, have no such fear of Nature's most necessary function. Only man fears it, and he does not fear the thing itself so much as what he has taught himself to believe shall be his experience after death. Conscious of a life beyond the tomb—knowing that Death does not end all—he feels his own unfitness for the place or condition which centuries of false teaching has shaped in his imagination. ¶ He has trained his mind to look upon heaven and hell as an after state, neither of which he is quite sure of. He has built Heaven so high that, knowing his own failings and weaknesses, and conscious of his breaches of the moral laws with which tradition has surrounded him, he fears to meet the God he has made for himself, in his own image, and draws away from the unknowable in fear and trembling.

All this is natural enough for man, since from the beginning he has been taught that he was born fore-ordained to be damned, but it is not the mental condition of Nature.

Before man had any knowledge of good and evil, he was as indifferent to his future state as any other animal, and therefore was not pestered with any question about the whence and whither and why of it all. But as soon as he partook of the fruit that made him

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like the Being in whose image he was made, he felt his unworthiness and tried to hide himself. He has been doing so ever since.

The "lower animal"—the dog, for instance—does not have any fear of death, because he has no knowledge of right and wrong. To him death means—we do not know. But how much better for him that he has not set laws for himself,—or allowed other dogs to do it,—that are unnatural for him to follow. The dog lives his life as a dog of his breed should, and when death comes he takes it as naturally as he would a bone from his master's hand.

I do not know. Man may have a higher nature than the dog. But, if he has, why does he live his life so unnaturally that he is ever on bad terms with Nature, and unworthy of the best the Universe has to bestow on him? Why wasn't he endowed with qualities that would enable him to live his life as true to Nature as the dog, or the cat, or the bird, or the beast, or the plant lives his? Is it possible that the highest Expression of Nature in animal form is more imperfect than the lowest Expression of Nature? Is it possible? Or is it just man's misconception of things? Is it not just possible that man, in his hankering after knowledge, has sought to build about himself restraints that Nature and Nature's God never intended him to have? And isn't it just possible, too, that, should these restraints be torn away and cast aside, and man return to the natural God-animal that he is, there would be no thought of right and wrong, but all his actions and

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thoughts would be in absolute harmony with Nature, and therefore with the Being we call God?

Why expect more of man than he is capable of rendering? Does it seem reasonable for an All-Wise Being to make something after his own image and not endow it with sense enough to know what it ought to do? To say it were so, is to deny the wisdom of the Master. And to go still farther and declare that after the All Wise created the man after His Own Image, and, knowing him to be without knowledge and reason, He left him at the mercy of the evil one, and, then, because the man gave way to the wiles of the evil one, to say that God turned upon him and damned him, and all that came after him, is the most unreasonable proposition human or divine mind could imagine.

No human father could conceive such a diabolical plan. When a son is born endowed with the parents' evil propensities and passions, this fact is taken in palliation of any offense he might commit. Cruel—cruel, indeed—would be that father who would damn the son or daughter of his loins for expressing the natural bent of his or her Nature Self. ¶ And to allow ourselves to be carried away by the mythical belief that God—All Wise—All Powerful—All Loving—did make man in His own image and bestow upon him all knowledge but the knowledge of good and evil, and then did set before him the tree of knowledge and demand him to restrain from eating of its fruit on the penalty of knowing right from wrong—to believe that God did this, I say, and, too, before the man Adam

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knew right from wrong, is the most preposterous proposition with which the human mind ever had to deal. It is inconceivable how a Being All Wise could expect a being without knowledge of right and wrong to follow the dictates of any other passion than that of Desire. And it is hideous to teach that this All-Wise Being did damn the Being who knew not what was wrong until he had committed it; and not only this being, Adam, but all beings made like him from the dawn of creation until its night.

The teaching, I say, is hideous. And yet, upon this teaching hinges the truth or falsity of Society's position with regard to man's destiny.

¶ It is not the writer's desire to bring into question beliefs that have stood for so much that has been dear to the heart of humanity all the ages that are past, but he feels that all of man's fear of death is based upon this remarkable story of man's downfall, and back of it, and in it, and from it, springs the great cause of man's inhuman treatment of the spirit within him called God, and his unnatural expression of Life as it flows through him.

Take away this abominable, unnatural, inhuman belief about God and man and the devil, and the relation of these three in the crime of man's downfall, and you take away all fear, and place an entirely different complexion on man, his privileges and his responsibilities. Instead of making him a cringing criminal unworthy the love of his God, you make him a creation of the Power Divine, made in God's image, and placed on earth as His representative, fit to do His will and

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made for that purpose. You make him feel, not only his privilege, but also his responsibility, and he will not think of doing what is contrary to the will of Nature and Nature's God. On the other hand; teach him that he is here, conceived in sin, damned before he knows what life is, and impress upon him—day after day, week after week, year after year, century upon century,—that he is a weakling—prone to do evil—sinful and mean; that all his fathers before him were no better than he—all damned before birth,—and what kind of manhood flowers?

"But," I hear you say, "you take out of life God's plan of salvation. You would do away with the need of a Savior." Well, what of it? But I do not. I would acknowledge, if you please, the supremacy of Christ as the Son of God. I believe He is. And as a Savior? Yes. The life He spent upon earth, judging from what we know of it, made Him a Savior—just as the life of any man who lives so Nature can speak and act through him makes him a savior to others.

When we forget that we are we, and feel that the I,—the ego,—the It-All of the universe (call it God, Nature, Spirit, what you will), when we feel that It is ourselves, and that this body—this thing we call man—is only the instrument through which Life flows—then do we realize what was meant by Christ's words: "My Father and I are one—He in me—I in you."

¶"But man is a free agent," you say. Yes, he is. Free to accept defeat and condemnation by closing his life to the inflow and outflow of humanity's love, thus retarding the natural unfoldment of Nature through

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him; or free to accept all, and allow himself to be made a motor through which life is generated and made to serve the It-All of the universe, which ever is striving for more perfect expression, whether through man or beast, fowl, fish or plant life.

¶ My God is a Being of Truth and Love. He is Truth and Love. My God is not a Being of jealousy and revenge. I grow into my God, as I allow Nature expression through me; I do not grow from him. To be like my God, I am my God: i. e., my God is in me. And when my God is in me, I will not dishonor him by whining about my weaknesses.

¶ My mind recalls the impressions I had, when, a straight-haired lad of seven years, I sat by mother's side in the old home church, and, parrot-like, repeated the service of an established religious society. Sunday after Sunday, I watched others come and go, and heard them recite by rote as I did, the stereotyped expressions, "have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," "spare us, Good Lord," "Good Lord, deliver us," etc., and my boy's heart recoiled at the thought that God was such a Being as would delight to have his children come before him with such a shameful wail upon their lips. I knew many kind and loving people in those congregations, and I did not believe they were poor miserable sinners. In fact, I knew they were not. And the logic of my boyish mind would not permit me to think that they themselves believed they were so bad as their wail of woe made it appear.

I did not know then the names of the men who prepared that bemeaning service of supplication. Nor do

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I care now. This is the truth that came to me then, and has grown upon me since: No man or body of men can frame words for me that will express my love for the God of Nature; and no man or body of men can prepare a prayer that will tell my heart's wish for my fellows or express my heart's praise of its fulness of the Divine in all. Nor could any man, or body of men, prepare a stock letter that would convey to God my confession of sin—if such were necessary.

¶ I cannot imagine a Supreme Being so hideous as to take pleasure out of having me run to Him every Sunday and mumble in his ear a stereotyped indictment against myself, written by men, perhaps two or three hundred years before I was born. One tiny thought of love from my heart to His is worth all the buzzy-wuzzy prayers, sung do-see-do, that ever clogged the flow of Nature's love and repressed the expression of the Divine in me.

The writer is quite sure that Man's Divinity should make more of him than a talking machine. ¶ I was reading the other day the story of a young, sweet singer, who sang into a phonograph, and a few weeks later sickness robbed Life of a vessel of expression through her here. At the grave, while her body was being lowered into the earth, her voice was heard from the talking machine singing, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." And I thought it was all very nice. ¶ There is something Divine in the work of men and women who find themselves before death robs Nature of expression through them here. For then they leave the world something it did not have before—their indi-

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viduality. Ofttimes, centuries after their bodies are broken and their faces forgotten, the world listens to words expressing that individuality, though it refused to hear them when Life animated the mortal machine. To find himself, man must search. He must refuse to be content to accept what is. ¶ The thought that wiggled its way into me and became part of my life when a boy, as I heard the same cry of guilt and shame repeated week after week, was this: If so much has been done that ought not to have been done, and so much left undone that ought to have been done, why don't you good people do what you ought to do, and leave undone what you ought not to do? My inquiries then and since have elicited no answer.

I know a lot of good people who still continue to say what they used to say when I was a boy, and yet I am sure they do not believe what they have been telling God all these years; and if anybody else were to say of them what they have said of themselves they would complain mightily—and I would not blame them.

All this is written in simple love, and with no desire to cast a ray of doubt or cynicism upon the established order of things. However, men will think. And if we take down the bars and let the light into the mind, Nature shows us many things we did not know before. It is a psychological fact, that man will be what he thinks he is. Let him repeat the thought as the days go by that he is miserable, sinful and worthy only to be damned, and he will be damned, because he ought to be. As one has expressed it: "He will be hypnotized by his own thoughts," and what,

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by repeated suggestion, he has been taught to think he is, he will be. A deadening of soul growth will be the result. ¶ And while we are speaking on the question of Soul Growth, let me say what you already know.

¶ "Soul Growth" is generally understood to mean something apart from man's daily routine. It has a churchy sound, and man associates it somewhat unconsciously with his Sunday-go-to-meetin' clothes. Never did he make a greater mistake. In days of old, when knights were bold—or they weren't—the priests claimed to hold the fate of the souls of men in their hands. Some believe so yet. With them I have no quarrel. If an individual is so blind to his privileges as to place in the hands of another the care of his Soul (Life) it is for him to obey the one to whom he enslaves himself.

But let us take away from "Soul Growth" all thought of priest-craft, churchism and sacrifice. ¶ Place man in the light of what he is: A God in the chrysalis. "My Father and I are one: He in me; I in you." There is no mistaking the meaning of these words. They are simple and direct. Where in them do we find the thought of the priest intruded? If, then, man is God in the chrysalis, there must be an unfoldment of the soul if there is to be Soul Growth. The word unfoldment conveys the right idea. It means continuous action—perpetual unfolding—a gradual, steady undoing. Like the rose bud, we retain Life as we unfold it, for in the unfolding we express the Universal Life that flows through us. If the bud does not unfold it

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never becomes the rose, and all of Nature (and what is Nature is God) is robbed thereby of so much Life Expression. ¶ Man's soul is like the rose. Ordinarily it buds. But how often it dies only a soulbud. And because it is only a soulbud, Nature is deprived of so much Life Expression, and this heaven of ours is thereby made the meaner.

¶ The Soul's unfoldment comes as all things of Nature come. Man is a reasoning being, and must unfold in a reasonable way. First, then, he must recognize that he is a Soul—that through him Nature is expressing herself in a different way than she ever expressed herself before, or can express herself through another, and yet in a perfectly natural way. To do this she must not be hampered by man in his false notions about Goodness. Custom and the priest have combined to so mystify man about his moral downfall that his whole life is spent in whining about his unworthiness. As a result he does not unfold. He never gets beyond a soulbud condition. Let him live the Life of Love, day by day, and Nature will not ask more. Soul unfoldment will come as naturally as the sunshine makes the rosebud unfold into the rose.

Perhaps I am wrong. But may not we treat our souls with the same consideration that we do our stomachs, for after all is said, one is not far separated from the other. Feed the stomach the proper nourishment; give it work, and rest, and quiet, when it needs it, and it never will cause any uneasiness. You will not know you have a stomach but for the pleasure it brings you.

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¶ The rose does not stop to question the fragrance of its perfume. Neither does the skunk cabbage. Each seeks to express Nature—one as faithfully as the other.

¶ When we speak about Soul Growth the listener or reader usually falls at once into the mistake of believing that it has reference to the individual's welfare in the after life. Soul Growth to the writer means much more than this. While it does have bearing upon the individual's future state as well as his present, its chief bearing is upon what we know as Life, whether here or there. And by Life, I mean Universal Life—not Individual Life. There is that longing in you and me which prompts us to do and dare things that bring us much unpleasantness, and sometimes remorse. We do not know why we do it, and while we labor under the load of remorse we fain would retrace our steps if it were possible. But slowly the remorse wears off, and we find as we emerge from the shadow that Life is more abundantly ours than before we passed into the shadow. ¶ We developed in the shadow what we could not have developed in the bright sunshine, and we find that Nature flows into us and through us more freely now than before. ¶ For days and perhaps weeks after one of these shadow spells, we feel free as the birds of the air, and can see how good life is. We see back of the cloud—back of the action that brought remorse—back—back of the thing that brought us happiness before, and it seems so commonplace—so insignificant—that we wonder we ever could have taken pleasure out of it.

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Not until then do we realize that we have grown—not till then do we see how necessary the cloud was. Thus we learn by easy stages that this Individual Life is only an atom in the Universal Life, and that as we pass through experience after experience we grow into a being which becomes ever more capable of giving expression to the Life that Is—the Life Universal.

Could man realize more perfectly the limitlessness of Life, and feel the indestructibility of it—could he feel the immensity of his capacity to give expression to it,—if he could but live above his conception of the Individual Life—then the beauty of it all, and the grandeur, would blind him to the incongruities of what we are taught to look upon as human existence.

We speak of Soul, and Life, and Spirit, as if we knew these things to be individual Somethings distinct and apart from each other—and then we say that in this body of matter these Somethings dwell. We speak of “the Spirit of Man,” “the Soul of Man,” “the Life of Man,” as if we believed man consisted of this poor vessel we dress up and give a distinguishing name—as if man were something superior to and distinct from all other forms of Life. And then, as a natural sequence we indulge the thought that this superior being called man is removed from any accountability to any other form of life. He can kill the “lower animals” with impunity, destroy at pleasure, and is accountable to no one for thus expressing the brute in him.

This is the natural outcome of the unnatural conception we have of Life. We are prone to individualize

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things. We speak of the animal, the tree, the plant, the bird, man, God, devil, priest, saint and sinner, as if each were a distinct life and had no relation to the Life that Is—the Universal Life. We speak of Nature and of God—of natural things and spiritual things—as if the Being called God had no relation to Nature and was, in fact, opposed to it. Thus we build up in the Life of the Universe,—of which the life of man is only one form of expression,—a life of antagonism, in which we teach the doctrine of “every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.”

Such a teaching, which man stubbornly holds to, appeals to the negative side of him. He is taught to express as little as possible of Nature Life, and so, because he expresses little—gives little—he gets little—does not grow. Growth—Soul Growth, like all other forms of growth, is experienced by man just in proportion to his capacity to give expression to Life as it comes to him.

¶ If we cultivate the selfish temperament we shall not desire to give any more of Life than we have to; and Nature will not thrust upon us a task we do not care to do, but will find another vessel through which to give Life.


¶ All men have a desire to live abundantly. There is a sort of mechanical existence that we call life, which is most attractive to man, but which is so artificial and baubleized that Nature finds no expression through it. In such a life we find no Soul Growth, because the Soul of Nature has been crowded out.

¶ Soul-Growth is man's natural unfoldment into God.

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When we can go into the forest and feel the warm heartbeat of the It-All in the trees in response to the heartbeats of the It-All in us; when we can commune with the It-All, as It speaks through the flower, the bird, the beast, the rolling heavens, the mourning seas, the pastoral landscape, the scraggy peaks and the rumble of the city's marts—when we can feel with It, and think with It, and know that we are part of It, then we know the possibilities of man and learn what Life is, for then we die to live—the individual man is lost in the Expression of the Whole.

We are man-shaped atoms through which the Universe works; we are the bowls from which is poured the Spirit of the Eternal God.



NEVER try to stop an ambitious man. In the first place, you cannot do it; that's the work of the Omnipotent. In the second place, it will not do you nor him any good if you succeed. Stop him today, and tomorrow he will break out in a new place. God bless him; that's what we like about him. He never is stilled. Forge ahead he will! If you find his pace too fast for you, better drop out than be a drag. Give him rein. If he is right he will succeed whether or no; if he is not right, the quickest way to stop him is to let him stop himself.

SIMPLICITY OF NATURE

"We are all children of the kingdom of God! and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."—Hubbard.



WARM summer wind blows toward me over the sweet-smelling clover field. With each breath I see visions of childhood days, when life was all so happy because it was so simple. Yonder in the corner of the old rail fence I see frisky, rollicking Maud, and around her Tommy, Dick and Harry; Alice, Annie and Kate. Their sunburnt faces are hid in the clover. I cannot see the glow of their ruddy cheeks, but their child-like prattle and merry laugh tells me so many things about Goodness that I did not know before. I see the tops of their flaxen heads just even with the red clover balls, some of them sun-bonneted, and some glistening golden in the sunlight. Now and then one will bob up and down, so joyous, and careless, and gay. How indifferent they are to life—so happy in each other's love. They are healthy, rollicking boys and girls; full of what Nature put into them—no better, no worse than any other children. They do not know they have a stomach until

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they abuse it—do not know what Goodness is until they misuse it—content and happy—glad to be just what they are because their minds have not been warped into believing that there is something better for them in the meadow beyond.

Would I be a child again? No; not in pinafore. But this I would be—now and always—a child in spirit. I know we are not any older than we feel. I would make all this world a clover field: red-topped, shower-bedewed, and kissed by the glowing sun. In my corner of it, I would be a child forever, and with those I love about me I would be what God by nature made me—no better, no worse, than you, my brother. And as I became childlike I would become Christlike. Not a whining, whimpering baby would I be, continually bemoaning my sinfulness. My stomach would not ache because I would not eat green apples. My soul would not cry out in anguish, because it would not be in anguish. I would be a child in spirit. And, do you know, sister; children do not know what a pain is if they are healthy. Neither do souls, if they are let alone, and are healthy.

SEEKING THE IMPOSSIBLE

"I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitate humanity so abominably."—Hamlet.

THE old man's head was white with years, and he walked with feeble and uncertain step, leaning upon a stick. The granddaughter was just closing

her teens and soon would step off into the twenties. She was graceful as a fawn; lithe and pretty. They sauntered along the path crossing the meadow where the morning sun tips the green and makes the dew-drops sparkle like jewels upon the neck of a Venus waiting the coming of Adonis.

¶ "I do so want to be good, Grandpa," she said. "But it is almost impossible, sometimes."

¶ "Want to be good, did you say, girlie? Ah, no; don't 'want to be good.' Be what you are,—that is enough—just what you are. Everybody 'wants to be good.' The mortal does not live who has not felt with you that unsatisfied longing. What does it mean, this desire 'to be good?' Perhaps the working of the Divine in us; perhaps a consciousness that we are not living up to our Ideal? I do not know. Somebody has said, that if we do not live up to our Ideal, it will come down to us. Haven't you, time and again, felt a Divine impulse to go forward and upward—to grasp the opportunity that would lift you nearer your Ideal? And you failed—failed because—because—oh, dear! What shall I say? Then will come that longing 'to be good.'

"Listen, daughter; is there any merit in such a longing when we know it is the result of our own lack of will to do the thing? Had we done it, the longing would not be in the heart, but we would feel the comfort of having done that which would bring us nearer what we ought to be. Having failed, we try to patch things up with ourselves—our conscience—and long 'to be good.'

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"The fact is, little girl: this 'be good' business is worked to tatters. There isn't anything in it. It is all a false alarm, arising out of a false belief. When we do our duty, we do not think of 'being good.' We simply are, and that is all of it."

And with this May and December walked hand in hand out of hearing.

MOULTING OUR IDEAS

"Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature up to Nature's God."—Pope.

ALL men seek to know the Truth. The reason some men know more of it than others is because they are prepared to step farther in advance of "the accepted order of things" than others. They seek diligently for it, and do not stop even when they run in conflict with what has been accepted as Truth by their fellows for years, and, perhaps, ages past.

The man seeking to know the Truth does not stop to question what others think of it when he finds it. He accepts it, no matter where he finds it, and however unorthodox it may appear. It matters little to him if others cannot see it as he does. He knows it is Truth, and all the powers that be cannot turn him from it. Men may laugh and quibble, but the Truth-seeker does not mind them. He knows intuitively what is sound and what unsound, and, though all the known world may flout his testimony, he holds fast to what he has discovered, knowing some day others

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will see it. The men who have done most to shake the world have been men who, like Pericles, Socrates, Jesus, Paul, John, Darwin and Hubbard, have been brave enough to stem the current of popular belief, and big enough to state the Truth as they saw it, when they saw it, no matter if it required that they go contrary to the previous belief of the whole world, themselves included. The man who is not prepared to relinquish his ideas of yesterday for newer ideas today, cannot hope to make head in the way of Truth. "Consistency," said Emerson, "is the hobgoblin of little minds," and this is never more strikingly exemplified than in the matter of ideas. The small man is he who refuses to accept new ideas because they conflict with those of yesterday. The smallest man is he, who, refusing to accept today's ideas, condemns and damns the man who does. It may be true, it no doubt is, that the man who refuses to accept today's ideas is honest in his effort to be consistent. But no man because he is honest, or thinks he is, can claim the right to bind another down to his ideas of Truth. What I know of Truth today may not be—will not be—all that I shall know of Truth tomorrow—if I am advancing. Each day I must become better acquainted with Truth than I was the day before. If I do not my ideas will become stale, and bigotry, like gangrene, will eat into my soul.

Over in Canada they have a colony of Dukhobors. As members of society they are a quiet, sober and hard-working people. They are the offshoot of a Russian religious sect founded in Kharkov about 1750-75. The

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rapid growth of the sect brought upon its members governmental persecution as early as 1797 to 1800. Then the government thought better of the Dukhoborts and settled them upon a tract of fertile land on the banks of the river Molochnaya in Taurida. Relieved from official annoyances the colony soon experienced a period of thrift and prosperity. Then again, about 1819, the government resumed hostile measures, the result of a policy of the church to bring all religious elements of the Russian empire into conformity with Greek Catholicism. So severe were the measures, and so cruel the treatment of these honest people by the Russian church, that early in the nineties, if you remember, the attention of the outside world was attracted to them, and after long petitioning many thousands were allowed to leave for Cyprees and Canada.

The religious views of these people are simple in the extreme, and are handed down by oral tradition. Christ was only a man of superior godlike intellect, and his soul has migrated into many mortals. All people are equal, and, being children of God, do what is right; hence there is no need of rulers. They do not visit churches, considering that wherever two or three persons endowed with intellect, even if Jews or Mohammedans, gather for worship, there is a church. They accept the Ten Commandments, and of the Bible "only the useful portions," interpreting the rest allegorically. They have no icons, confessions or ceremonies at marriages, which they contract by the heart's inclination only. In private life, wives and

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husbands are sisters and brothers; the parents "old man" and "old woman." The plenary power of a Dukhobor community is vested in the assembly of elders, presided over by a bishop.

My purpose in thus going into detail about the Dukhobors is twofold. First, all men must concede that the Dukhobor gets nearer to Nature than the most of us, and therefore has much in his religious life that is superior to much to be found in the life of any modern denominational sect. But, to offset his good qualities, the Dukhobor has much in him that is bad. It is a way Nature has. When you see a man with marked qualities in one direction he will be found deficient in another. It has to be this way to preserve a balance. ¶ The creed of the Dukhobor teaches that it is sinful to eat any kind of animal substance, and they strictly adhere to that belief by refusing to use anything that has come in contact with any animal.

When the Canadian government brought that colony of Dukhobors from Russia, each head of a Dukhobor family was given 160 acres of land; houses were built for them and their farms stocked with horses, cows and poultry. Farming implements were given them, and a number of men were employed to show them how to work. Of course, no government could be expected to show as much consideration for the poor and hungry of its own native-born. In matters of charity we often rob our own of the needful to give to those infinitely better off if let alone. ¶ And so the Canadian government refused assistance to its own native-born, and spent several hundred thousand dol-

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lars for the Dukhobor. This, of course, is nothing against the Dukhobor. What I am getting at is this: While the Dukhobor is intensely religious, and politically he is theocratic, he is also stubbornly foolish and distressingly lazy. His bishop's word is his law. But he won't work if he can get the Lord to keep him from hunger without it. Instead of staying home and tending to his knitting, he goes a-swarming periodically in search of the Christ. When he is induced to work he hitches his wife to the plow along with the oxen and makes her hold up her end with the ox. Perhaps the best we can say of him is that he is religious.

It is this parallel that we are arriving at: The Dukhobor's soul is bound up in his bishop! The Soul of the man who dukhobors life, is bound up in the world's ideas of yesterday. While each may be honest, he is not wise. No man can have wisdom who limits his thoughts to those of others, and confines his ideas to those of yesterday. History is full of proof. Where such a condition exists, Truth is buried beneath the gangrene of bigotry. Nations and men are made great by mothers and wives of thoughtfulness and love. Hitch a woman to a plow with the ox and we have a priest-ridden people. And a priest-ridden people never has stood ace high in either intelligence or morals. Now, what is a priest-ridden people? I'll tell you what: A priest-ridden people is a people which never has risen above its ideas of yesterday.

THE MYSTERY OF MAN

"Man never is, but always to be blest."—Pope.



HE remarkable thing about it is that man will persist in building up an unfathomable mystery about himself, and his future, and then pay another man to give him peace of mind by offering a solution that does not solve. It seems to be a weakness of human nature that impels men to take the way that appears most mysterious to accomplish the ordinary. In his efforts to discover some new way to perform life's duties, man has formulated a thousand and one creeds and beliefs, each of which adds more mystery to the things he desires light upon.

When the priests heard Christ's simple doctrine of Love and Service he was swept away in a whirlwind of abuse. Up to the time of his coming "sacrifice" was the keynote of the established church, and the word was set to the jingle of silver and gold. Then came the teaching that service is more acceptable than sacrifice, and forthwith the priest saw his doom. One of two things had to happen: The holy synod had to put

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Christ out of existence or get out of existence itself. Naturally the church chose its priestly privilege and sacrificed Christ, that it might live in his name.

¶ Man is a peculiar animal. ¶ There is just one thing more strange, and that is his mate, woman.

“You gaze at a star for two motives, because it is luminous and because it is impenetrable. You have by your side a sweeter radiance and greater mystery—woman,” said Hugo.

In his business life man is as reasonable and sensible as can be, but in matters affecting soul growth—really the higher and better part of his nature—he is most unreasonable. Go to the ordinary business man with a proposition affecting his business and he will take it up and weigh it carefully. If you can show him that it means greater success and greater opportunity for him, he will put his money into it and set the machinery in motion. He will make it operative as soon as possible, and keep it busy. Nor will he delegate to another the power to dictate the proposition. In all his methods he uses simple, honest, logical reason—and energy. ¶ Contrast this with his method of advancing his Soul Growth. Indeed, most of us have no method. No thought is taken of developing the divine in us, and to the priest is delegated the power to act for us. Our business with the Divine is done by proxy, if at all. ¶ As well say that I may send you to school to study mathematics for me, or to the gymnasium to develop my muscular power, or to the table and to bed to do my eating and sleeping. When we delegate to another that which we alone can

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do, we deprive ourselves of the only means by which we may assist our growth. ¶ We evolve into better men and women by doing well the common things of life.

When we exercise the physical and digestive apparatus, and allow the mental or the spiritual to stand still, we become one-sided, unsymmetrical beings, unfit for advancement. ¶ This is the condition of society today. It shows abnormal development along selfish lines. The church, moving with the crowd, has taken on the spirit of the day. It will evolve into something better when the people do. It never leads the way. All down the ages the way to progress has been opened by men who were ostracised by the church, and condemned by the priest. It was so when Jesus, the man Christ came. It was his simplicity and humility that upset the rutified formality so perniciously adhered to by the priests. He pointed to the absurdity of flowing gowns, long prayers, majestic church buildings, and a superfluity of altars of sacrifice. All of these things were as nothing to him if from the heart of man there did not flow the simple love that made the life radiate the Goodness of God. History is full of the names of men who, growing tired of the "religious" moaning for the "lost and sinful world," stood up boldly and declared the divine right of man to be as God. The priest never has been pleased to accept this teaching. He believes, or pretends to believe, that man is made good—absolved from sin—by his priestly prayers. As if Nature were going to teach a man goodness without compelling him to

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practice it! It is an absurd thought to pretend that we are damned until some man in a flowing gown condescends to absolve us and put within us good for evil.

Would to God men would stop long enough in their mad creed worship to get a right good hold upon themselves. Think, you! Are we to deny the God of the Universe expression through us for the sake of adhering to a narrow creed that depicts us as miserable sinners? Are we to blind ourselves to the living Spirit of Goodness within us that we might adhere to a doctrine of self-abasement? Are we to continue to refuse to receive that which by nature we are heirs to, simply to make room for and foster an organization of blind guides?

I like the writings of that grand old Apostle, Paul. When he tells us that the kingdom of heaven is within us, he does not talk in riddles. Custom has a way of rolling the eyes upward when the word heaven is mentioned, and the priest points away off yonder into space. But men of all ages big enough to stand true to their convictions, and bold enough to give expression to the Alpha and Omega in them—call it Nature, Truth, or what you will—have at all times declared with the Apostle, "the kingdom of heaven is within you." Absurd, indeed, is the idea that heaven is a place where there will not be any useful work performed. ¶ In our present state of development—and we are as yet but poor expressions of Nature—we know how essential to our evolution into more perfect vessels is honest, useful labor. Let a man be kept

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busy in a useful calling and he grows steadily into something better; but give him nothing to do, and he at once begins to drift into decay.

When we see a man spend millions on his home, providing for himself luxuries that create a demand for laziness that he may enjoy them, we feel the pity of it, and the words uttered so long ago ring in our ears, "Fool, this night thy soul shall be demanded of thee."

We know that such a life can lead only to oblivion—spiritual forgetfulness—in which there can be no Soul Growth; and we know that death of soul must follow. The strenuous life—the life that accomplishes something—is the life we point to with pride. Where is the honest man who does not hate a lazy man?

¶ And yet, the heaven these false prophets point us to is to provide us a place of rest, where we can sit and just sing for God's sake.

If the streets of the far away heaven are paved with gold, and the gates studded with pearls, then gold and pearls are as common there as concrete and cobble stones are here. And one is no more serviceable than the other. ¶ Of course, we know this is all a fairy tale, told as we sometimes hear stories told to children today, to make them be good—a promise, that if we don't do what we want to now we may, after a while, do as we please. The tendency of it all, while it may cause us to sacrifice things here in the hope of having something better than our neighbor there, the tendency of it all is to cause us to look away from ourselves for what we should find within,

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and to forget the real of life in blindly yearning for something that does not exist outside of story lore. How much better it would be to turn our gaze from the heaven far away, and center it upon the heaven within the human soul. What nonsense to carry men away into realms of thought they can know nothing about, and blind them to their own Godlikeness by telling them that God is somewhere outside of themselves!

WHAT is this passion we call jealousy? The babe Ignorance, nursed in the lap of Lust. ¶ None but a fool would allow it to grow in the heart. It unfits a man for business—for society—for anything but the felon's cell or the padded chamber of a lunatic asylum. It burns out the heart and consumes reason. What consummate idiocy to attempt to pardon, condone, excuse this consuming passion! Someone has gone so far even to say that where there is no jealousy there is no love. The proof of the plum duff is in the eating: if you want to try it, get jealous, and you will find that love and jealousy cannot live in the same heart. I know: they do say that God is a jealous God, but I would as soon believe that God had a soul of clabber, a heart of green cheese and a head of sour dough.

NOT HOW MUCH BUT HOW WELL

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."
—Wordsworth.



O your thoughts "knock the persimmons?" In all of life's duties and privileges; in every phase and position and condition of society, man must answer for what he thinks as well as for what he does. No man can go back of his thoughts. He may lay the blame for his misdeeds upon another, and complain that environment and temptation forced him to do this, or to leave undone that, but his thoughts are his own children and it is for him to say what those thoughts shall be. It seems as though the power to think is the God in man, for as we develop the capacity to think we see more of good in the world and less of evil. And every thought of good, passing through the mind, leaves a trace upon our character. The more we think, the greater will be our capacity to think. Like Love, Thought grows as we exercise it. Our growth in character depends upon our growth in thought, not thought in a collective sense, but each individual thought, separate

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and apart from every other thought: not so much on how much we think, as how well.

The ability to think—to originate ideas—to give a personality to one's mental children—is not given at birth to one man and withheld from another; it is every man's for the taking. But thought is not a bastard child: it is the offspring of Concentration and Adaptation, born on the hard bed of Isolation. Solitude is a good berth in which to lay the child. ¶ But Solitude does not lead always to good thinking. Once I had a friend who lived a solitary life, and he allowed his thoughts to pull him into oblivion through the door opening into a suicide's grave. He was an exemplary young man; way above the average in intellect and training: manly in all things but his conduct toward himself. But he was not master of Inclination. Today was spent in brooding over yesterday's misdoings, instead of using today in developing today's blessings and privileges.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," applies to thoughts as well as to actions—secular and spiritual. It is not difficult to tell what a man's thoughts are when we can look into his eye, or can see his daily life. How many times we see men who can think and work all around a thing and never touch it? Their thoughts don't "knock the persimmons." Just like yours and mine, sometimes.

GIVE me health and a tin whistle and you can take the gilded palace and the band wagon.

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EVOLUTION OF THE SAW-FLY.

"For time will teach thee soon the truth,
There are no birds in last year's nest!"
—Longfellow.

THE best way to learn to do a thing is to keep right on doing something. Just as sure as a man proves himself faithful in something small, something a deal bigger will come up for him to do.

In childhood we were sent to school and made to learn, day by day, the lessons set before us. We did not know what it would lead to; we just surmised that we were learning something and so persisted week after week to master the studies that were given us.

Year by year we found ourselves more capable of doing the things we wanted to do, yet we could not tell just how the knowledge came to us. We only knew that we were compelled to study the lessons of the day—one lesson at a time, and just so many each day. It was not hard. It was natural—this process of education—always a gradual growth. There was never a mighty spurt and then a killing season of inactivity. All true education is thus a slow unfoldment. Today we see things more clearly than we did yesterday. Tomorrow we shall see them more clearly than we do today. We grow, step by step, into harmony with the Divine in Nature. This is no theory. Men intuitively accept it as a positive thing—they know that all unfoldment must be by easy stages. ¶ We can illustrate this by alluding to the life of the common saw-

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fly. The female deposits the egg into a pocket in the leaf of a tree. By absorbing the plant juices the egg enlarges, and finally the young larva comes forth on the upper surface of the leaf. Full size is reached in less than a month, but in that time the larva casts its skin four times, and usually eats its cast skin for its first meal after each molt. When full grown it molts a fifth time. Up to this stage a slimy, olive-colored liquid exudes over the whole body after each molting. Now it appears as a light orange-yellow worm, perfectly clean and dry, with no slime. In this shape it crawls down the tree and penetrates into the earth for half an inch or more and there it hibernates in a kind of cocoon made by its own saliva until the following spring. Up to this time it is known as the pear slug. When it emerges from the cocoon in the spring it is the saw-fly. Step by step it evolves into what nature intended it to be.

This is a crude illustration, but it shows the natural working of the law of evolution. In every condition of life man evolves by easy stages into a more perfect being. He molts his ideas, and about the first thing he does after each molting is to figuratively eat the skin that previously clothed him.

Recognizing this as the principle controlling all natural life, it is strange that man should expect anything different in the higher order of being. And, yet, in matters affecting the higher attributes of his being—what we recognize as the spiritual side—man expects the divine gift of God to be handed out to him like a prize package at a church fair. Men seek to know the

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depths, and breadths and heights of God's mercy and wisdom and love, who never have taken the pains to learn the alphabet in Spiritual things. Again, we sometimes see our splendid orthodox brethren praying for God's sake for some rich blessing to fall upon themselves or their church. They forget that the richest blessing that can come to one was given to the Man Jesus—and that blessing was the privilege that is yours and mine as much as it was His—the privilege of working for man's salvation and finally to die for him.

We save man not by preaching at him, but by working with him the work that is ours today to do. Preaching never saved a soul from hell. The most it ever did was to waken a soul to its responsibilities. A life of quiet, unpretentious, uncomplaining, satisfying labor—doing things because they ought to be done—not for praise and glory—is a deal more worthy. We should ask no blessing from God that we are not prepared to work for, then we shall not be disappointed.

GOD does not need our help so much as His children do; and the saints and martyrs long dead do not need our fellowship so much as our fellows do. God can take care of Himself: our duty is in doing for those about us.

THAT FRIEND OF MINE

"Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong."—Longfellow.



EAR Friend: You explained the text, "Unto him who hath," etc., so satisfactorily to me that I want to ask you to tell us some time about another thing I have been thinking of. I have a sister living with me who is a member of an orthodox church and in a discussion the other day she said no one could be really good who had not been to God and humbled himself and asked forgiveness for past sins. I said I did not think God wanted us to spend our time in useless regrets over what was past but to start now on the way to do our best each day in the right direction. And my sister quoted the Lord's prayer that we both learned to say at our mother's knee. And she said that Christ said, "When ye pray, say 'Our Father who art in heaven,' etc., and when she reached the 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,' she laid great stress upon that. Now I want to know just what you think of this, and thought perhaps you would

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write something for us in our Best Magazine that would settle the point. She thinks we ought to acknowledge ourselves to be poor, miserable sinners, and falling on our knees acknowledge ourselves to be such to God. But somehow I could not think it necessary for us to do that. Do you? B. C. H.

"The man of perfect virtue, wishing to establish himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to enlarge himself, he seeks to enlarge others."—Confucius.

There is as great a knack in putting a question as in answering one, and this friend has that knack. If our answer to the question will open to the questioner as broad a field of thought as her asking the question has opened to the writer, we all shall have gained by it. First, then, what is the meaning of being good? One man's standard of Goodness is quite different from another's. No two standards are alike. I have my standard, you have yours, but neither you nor I have any right to compel another to come up to that standard. My standard is for me; your standard for you. ¶ Christ's standard of Goodness was for him. It was so different from the then orthodox standard of Goodness that he was crucified for teaching it. And, again, what is meant by the expression "been to God?" One child has its way of going to its father and telling him what it believes he will be interested in knowing; another child has another way. There may be a vast difference in the way they do it, but who shall say one way is wrong and the other right? ¶ And then, too, dear heart, isn't Goodness Goodness, wherever you find it? If so, and you spend your days

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in doing what you believe to be good, are you to be damned in spite of it all because you do not comply with what another has set as his standard of Goodness? ¶ Christ met the same rebuke at the hands of the priests of long ago. He neglected to fulfill the requirements of the orthodox church and, instead, spent his days comforting the widows and fatherless, healing the sick, and feeding the poor. He even went so far as to desecrate the Sabbath in the very face of a hostile priesthood.

No amount of law observance would have put the spirit of love into Christ. And with all the sackcloth and ashes business demanded of him by the priests, the Son of God never could have accomplished his mission on earth had he done that, and that only, thus fulfilling the law.

I am not going to say what is essential to Goodness in you. I only know what is essential to goodness in myself. But of this I am sure: if I should hear a child go to its earthly parent day after day, week in and week out, and whine about being so miserably sinful, I should feel that that parent was not fulfilling his duty to that child did he not lay the youngster across his knee and spank some goodness into it. I do not want to say anything unorthodox, but really, now, don't you think God gets very tired hearing this melancholy wail that goes up day after day about man's sinful and wormy condition?

I would not say that man should refuse to humble himself before God and ask His forgiveness. If we feel we have done wrong to anybody we ought to be

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ready at all times to make matters right by seeking forgiveness. But, goodness, me! Are we to be "weak and unworthy, miserable offenders" forever? And if not forever, then how long? Until we have "been to God?" And who is to say when that is? When we have joined some orthodox church? Perhaps, for some. But I am sure the worst complainers I ever heard have been the best followers of orthodoxy. Sunday after Sunday, year after year, they carry the same story to God about their unworthiness and miserable sinfulness. Mind you, I am not saying they are not unworthy. For I do not think any man is worthy of another's love who believes that he is not. I would not give my love to anyone who was ever whining about his unworthiness. Would you? And I am positive, from what I have seen, that God does not.

The man or woman who is worthy of God's love gets it. And the best evidence we can have that a man has "been to God" is when we see him engaged in acts of kindness to his fellows, and standing upright before the world as a man, made in the image of God, unabashed and not afraid. God does not want man made in his image to go groveling in the earth like a worm. I have very little respect for the man who can go to church Sabbath after Sabbath and, falling upon his knees, cry, "Good Lord, deliver us; forgive us, Good Lord; miserable offenders; we have left undone what we ought to have done, and have done what we ought not to have done, and there is no help in us." This is not humility. It is downright shamefulness. ¶ The best indication we can have that a man has repented

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of his sins is when he leaves off sinning. A business man does not mind a mistake now and then, but he detests having an employe about him who is everlastingly making mistakes, and coming whiningly to him confessing them. It is impossible for that man to grow into a more useful person while he persists in making mistakes, and is content to live in the false belief that confession of guilt is an excuse for wrong. Confession of guilt is nothing—repentance is nothing—if it does not lead a man to determine to quit the offense. And what is true in this respect of business is true in matters pertaining to man's spiritual condition. It is psychologically impossible for a man to become anything but a miserable sinner while he carries that thought in his mind. ¶ We become like our thoughts. If the mind is occupied with thoughts of our importance as messengers or mediums through which the Divine Power is working his own purpose, we forget all about the matter of sin and become ready instruments in the hands of the Power that is in and through and behind all. And as we hold the thought that we are Gods in the chrysalis we molt the idea that we are miserable sinners, and grow into God's handiwork in that we become like Him. And we never worry our heads about so small a matter as that of "being good," and "meeting God." When God wants us to meet Him, He will call us to Him. Until he does, it is enough for us to mind our own business and let Him use us as He sees best, in prosecuting the work of bringing all Nature into a more perfect expression of the Divine Love and beauty and power.

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You are right, dear heart; God does not want us to spend our time in useless regrets. And as for this good old orthodox custom of daubing one's self a "miserable sinner," and living so as to make the appellation stick; well, if that is the highest ambition one has, Nature will boost him that way. She is, however, just as ready to boost him the other way.

When our good brother, the Nazarene, said, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," he simply gave expression to a law that is absolutely just; a law that God himself could not reverse. It is that immutable law of Compensation. "Forgive us as we forgive." That is it: As we forgive. In the measure we forgive, we shall be forgiven. And so, dear heart, if we hold no malice against another—if we forget his weaknesses by focussing our gaze and our love upon his virtues, God will do likewise with us, and if we see no sin in others, God will see no sin in us. Jesus in his abundant love tried so hard to teach this. But he could not because the world was not ready for it. He gave his life because the law demanded it in compensation for the privilege of teaching his gospel of love, and in the giving gained immortality, a worthy recompense.

¶ "She thinks we ought to acknowledge ourselves to be poor, miserable sinners." How often? Every day? All the time? Who gains by such an acknowledgment? God, or we? Do you think God wants to have a lot of "poor, miserable sinners" working for Him? I would not. Would you? I like to have as associates in business and social life, men and women who

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haven't any time to quarrel with themselves, with God or with anyone else about their poor, miserable state. Men are poor and miserable, and sinful, too, only when they think they are. God does not want them to be, and nobody else wants them to be. But, when a man insists that he is, why, then, he is. That is his privilege, and we must acknowledge his right. Still he would be a much finer specimen of manhood were he to break away from that accursed belief and come out strong in the Sunlight of the Universal Love.

Why, bless your soul, brother, sister; what good reason can we have for loading our minds down with such distressing thoughts of sinfulness? Are we made any better by it? Be honest with yourself, now: do you feel you are making yourself or the world any better by confessing oft and sorrowfully that you are such a poor specimen of Nature's handiwork that you have got to keep up a continual quarrel with yourself about what you have done and left undone? Don't you think it would be more elevating for you, and therefore for the world, if you and I would cast off this puny attitude of weakness—for sinfulness is weakness—and get the thought firmly implanted in the mind that we amount to something, and are really instruments in the Divine Expression of the grandest and noblest and best in Nature?

How much love and cheer and happiness can a miserable workman in any calling bring or give to the world? How much of purity and faith and fellowship can a miserable sinner radiate on the path of life? ¶ No, no; it cannot be! We must look higher than

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this plane of thought of man's unworthiness, if we are to develop into something more useful to the world than a sin besmirched animal, self-appointed to be damned.

So long as man holds to this unworthy belief about himself, and what he knows as his God, he will not reach the plane he should. ¶ Let us abstain from doctrinizing and criticising. No man can doubt the sincerity of the men of all ages who have drummed this doctrine of sin into the heads of all peoples. It has continued until the world stinks to high heaven with a sinfulness self-inflicted, and foolish as it is unmerited. But, really, brother, do you believe that man is lower in the scale of animal life than the plant by my side or the pig across the way? The plant is not a "miserable sinner." It lives its life pure and holy in the hands of Nature. Its purpose in life is to express the Divine in Nature. The hog may wallow in filth, but that is his nature and, in spite of it, he is as pure and undefiled an expression of Nature as the rose in the garden or the new born babe at the mother's breast. Because one is lower in the scale of life than the other, it does not follow that it is less true in its expression of the Divine; and if not less true, then it is as holy as the other; whatever this word "holy" may mean.

Man develops by easy stages. The time he spends in his present form is not long. What he shall next be we cannot know. But this is sure: if he strives earnestly and seeks diligently to express from day to day more of the Divine in Nature, he shall develop into a

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more perfect medium through which more of what we call God shall find expression.

The fact that this is the way Nature does all things should cause us to stop in our foolish efforts to reach heaven by any other road. Nature will not be balked. She is Divine, and through her we see God. Nature puts as much of what we call God in every man as is necessary to make him radiate the life of Goodness. ¶ False teaching from away back down the ages has caused humanity to lose heart in itself. Hence the "miserable sinner" cry. But Nature is not so fickle as man. She ever stands ready to express through the individual as much of the Divine as the individual is capable of giving expression to. And his capacity is all a matter of the man's willingness to serve and his susceptibility of growth, coupled with his readiness to truthfully express the note that sounds in his heart. ¶ I say heart, because we understand the expression, but, as a matter of fact, we do not know where that little monitor we call Conscience lives; nor do we know that it is anything but the Divine in us. We feel it, but cannot tell whence it came nor whither bound. It is omnipresent but unexplainable. May it not be the God in us?

I have said that Nature puts enough of God in every man to make this world a paradise if man would give expression to it. Study it out and see if it isn't true. ¶ Instead of expressing his goodness, man has assumed the "miserable sinner" attitude, and the cry of the age is, "Good Lord, deliver us from ourselves." The assumption of sin has been handed down from father

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to child, until man, instead of being true to Nature, and allowing her perfect unfoldment through him, makes a felon of himself and his fellows.

And millions and millions of dollars are spent annually to erect churches wherein men make a show of goodness and sing praises to a God, who would, if permitted, find infinitely better expression through them in the every day work they do.

WE laugh at the old lady, and the young one, who expects to discover some sign of a favorable future in her teacup, and yet, we men do sometimes look for as foolish things in what we call luck, and chance. We believe we must wait for the opportunity before we can strike out for Success. If there is any one opportunity of a life time, when a man may look for results of his labors, it is when he decides definitely and forever to throw off all dependence on luck and chance, and centers his efforts on achievement through character, enterprise, and self-education. You are not prepared for another job until you can unselfishly love the job you have got. When push is applied to patience, and plod to purpose, no power on earth can cut you off from the paychute of Success.

JUST A THOUGHT

"I preached as never sure to preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men."—Baxter.



LET us go back tonight in memory to the old home far away, and take a peep in at Mother. She's waiting there to greet us, as only Mother can. Supper is over; the dishes are washed, and Mother has picked up the piece of work laid down when supper was announced. Adjusting her glasses she bends low to see the stitches are right, and proceeds in silence. Brother and sister are in the room. They have taken up their books to read, and are laying back for a lazy evening. A busy day at the office makes the quiet rest needful, and they do not want to be disturbed. Mother has been alone all day, with nobody about to talk to. She wants to talk now. A question or two is asked, but, receiving only a disinterested yawn for an answer, she concludes not to say any more, and silently works on.

A sigh from the heart tells of a load there, but she chokes it back and bends closer to her work. Her thoughts turn to the son and daughter out East—no matter where—you

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and I. Green fields are always away over there. Angelic daughters, and affectionate sons are, too. If you and I were only home—there by her side. The word of love, of confidence, that her dear ears have so long wanted to hear, would in love be spoken, and the tears of anguish now suppressed would give place to tears of joy.

Her Mother love ignores distance and starts out upon the sea of space like a Marconi “tick” to be picked up by the sympathetic heart tuned in harmony with hers. Into the hills of the lumber camps, up and down the village streets, and into the heights and depths of the city’s dives of manlessness, the vibrant love from the signal tower of Mother’s heart flits here and there. She calls and signals for the love of the boy and girl away from home; she longs to get in touch with the one who can bring joy to her lonely heart. ¶ Perhaps that one is you! See! Do you not see her, sitting lonely there, listening with the ears of the heart—ears so delicately attuned that the faintest wave of love flowing from you will be picked up by that heart of hearts! There is something so tender in Mother’s love, something almost divine. There isn’t a manly man that breathes who does not feel it—and honor it. Get in touch then, brother! Every thought of her flies home. It brings joy to her and ennobles you. And, think of it! All it costs is a thought—just a thought!

I SN’T it unfortunate that we are not somebody else!

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THE HARVEST OF OUR HEARTACHES.

"The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,"—Byron.

NATURE is as much pleased at our heartaches as at our joys. She is served as much by one as the other. And so, when life's trials bear heavily upon you—when the storms of criticism and sorrow roll over you—when the Valley of Defeat encompasses you; then, of all times, be brave!

¶ Oh, the good of a robust heartache! What growth we experience in it—if we take it rightly! What love has been planted; what joy has sprouted; what faith has bloomed! When stricken as from above by the hand of fate, or of a friend; when the light that has shone about us has been snuffed, and we are left, as it were, in darkness, and the shadow of gloom; when our very heartstrings seem almost to break, how prone we are to give up! how easy then to be conquered!

And yet, when we relax, when we cease to struggle, we find the phantom of sorrow disappears and we have nothing left to fight. Then, bless you, what a flood of joy comes into the heart, and how strong our love has grown! I have seen faces, and so have you, which told of hearts nigh bursting with grief: dazed, stunned, bereft; seen them in the street, in the home—in the glass, alone in the solitude of the bed-chamber. The look of anguish wrung our hearts. We tried to smile, and the face tried to smile back at us, but the lines tightened about the lips and great tears welled to the eyes. Something much prized has gone out of the life; per-

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haps someone has ceased to live, and there is such a hunger for love, such a capacity for affection! How we long to give the word that will give cheer and comfort; if we could but tell the sorrowing one that there is no tragedy except for those who believe it; that the hammering of Fate is but to put the soul into better trim for the work to be demanded of it—that every tear-drop carries from the heart some expression of the Divine personality; that the pains we feel are but the growing-pains of Nature giving birth to some new attribute in our cosmos. What “though some loved form is lying cold and rigid in death—will not we, too, some day fold our hands, just so, across our breasts and sleep! Or if love has gone to another, why should we desire to compel it; would we not make those free we love?” And, too, is not death as much the fulfillment of life as living? When the rose bush is dropping its leaves, and stands thorny and crooked and bare, is it fulfilling less the requirements of Nature than when it stands beautiful and green with foliage, and rich in fragrant bloom?

SUNSHINE OUT.

“Ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength,”—Scott.

FLEE the patronizing, superior man and woman. The world has little need of him or her. Such persons do exist, 'tis unfortunately true, and occasionally we see them thrust into positions they should not oc-

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cupy, but they are not needed. The community is better off without them. I have in mind an incident in life which I once saw portrayed. There was a dear old lady, surprisingly clever, kind, motherly, and considerate. And she was the plainest person that ever smoothed the troubled brow of sorrow's waif. Simple! why, bless you, she was simple as Mother—so simple she was misunderstood. There came before the grand, womanly soul a young, talkative thing with patronizing air, who knew so little she did not have to think when she talked. At a little social event the young woman brushed rudely by the old lady, with proud head thrown back and lips set in disdainful mockery. As she drew near the second time, leaning on the arm of her escort and with an air of superiority betokening ignorance, the dear lady leaned forward and smiled. That was all she did. But there was such simple kindness—such mother love—such nobility of character, behind that smile that the proud vixen was brought low, and for the moment she was a child again.

It is such simplicity this old world needs. It wants men and women who can rise above jealousy, malice, hate, whim, envy and fear—whose lives are pure as the atmosphere of the snow-capped hills—who live, and want others to live, their lives up to their highest and best. Men and women who will say the word of encouragement to the heart-sick soul, and will turn every sorrow bright side out—who will meet every disappointment, every difficulty, thoughtfully, and without fear and unabashed. Men and women who

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believe that the man who follows the plow is as good as the man who sits at the desk of the ruler of the nation—provided the man behind the plow is as simple and honest and kind; as frank and natural and God-loving, as the man at the head of the nation.

THE person who readily perceives faults, will never see anything else, for the eye is not trained to catch the good. Why? Why, because Goodness or Godness is not a part of their make-up. We attract the thoughts we hold. All Nature is in harmony. God's earth is as it should be. If it does not harmonize with our moods, we should change them. For, look here, brother; if we are suspicious of our fellows here we shall be suspicious of our fellows there: if we do not take heaven with us into the next world, it will be hell to be in heaven.

STAND for something! Don't be a putty man. Make your individuality felt, whatever your sphere of life. No circumstance, or combination of circumstances, can be set up as an excuse for your being a cipher. The greatest hindrance to success is self-distrust, and a lack of the initiative. Men were not created in the mass. God's best gift to you is your originality. Cherish it. It is yours. No one can take it from you if you refuse to let them.

THE SNAKE THAT GOD MADE

"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?"—Shakespeare.



DO not know what happens to you when you tread ruthlessly upon an ant, and beat the life out of a snake with a club; but when I hear of your doing it, my heart tells me there is so much less of God in the world and more of evil, for God is as much in the snake as in the ant, and as much in either as in you."

This thought has astounded some. Others it has set thinking. One dear heart tells me: "Oh, no! my friend; God fills all space; he is not in us nor in animals, but everything reflects God in degree. The moon reflects the sun, but the sun is not in the moon, nor is the moon in the sun."

Without going into any discussion of theology, let us draw close to that heart within and see what it tells us. It is true, as far as we know, that the sun is not in the moon. This, however, has nothing to do with God in man. According to scientists the moon is a dead world. What it was before it became a dead world we have no way

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of knowing. It reflects the sunshine; it does not reflect the sun. To reflect the sun it would have to be alive and give forth the heat of the sun as well as the sunshine.

Jesus had the right conception of life—perhaps the most natural and truest that ever came to man. And when he said: "My father and I are one; my father in me, I in you," he touched the source of all life, but did not go into it, for the world was not ready for it then. The same condition has stood in the way of many men since Christ, and deterred them in making known a fuller conception of man's relationship to the Power we call God.

Man is not a dead thing like the moon. The consciousness and subconsciousness of man; the impulses to do good that are in us all, no matter what our faith, our calling or creed, is an absolute assurance to my mind that the power or being we call God is not only in, and working through, but is actually a part of man. Our conception of the Being we know as God depends on our conception of the being we know as man. If our conception of one is erroneous, unnatural and weak, our conception of the other will be erroneous, unnatural and weak.

We know life only in the measure that we live it. If my mind has been confined to a narrow channel of thought in relation to my soul and the soul of my fellows; if I have been reared in the belief of man's eternal damnation, and his absolute unworthiness before the God Father who knows all and is in all space—and therefore must be in all living things that

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fill all space—then it will be unnatural for me to realize that God is in all. It will be extremely difficult, too, for me to see more than the animal in the man beside me.

But, on the other hand, if my mind thinks only those things of my fellows that brings man closer in harmony with nature and therefore with God, then it were easy for me to see God in my fellowman as well as in the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the green grass that carpets the rolling hills.

To know all is to love all, and to love all is to know God. We cannot know Him in any other way than by knowing him in and through the men and women by our side. If we live close enough to the Universal Heart we shall know in a natural way the God in Nature and what heaven is. If we have allowed man to detract our thoughts from the God Man in Man, then we shall pass clean out of harmony with the deep underlying principle that is in all Nature, and our thoughts will be restricted to the narrow line where Nature's shallows lay bare the weaknesses of the man animal.

To say that we know God while there is a particle of doubt in our minds about the inherent Godhead in man, is to deceive ourselves. If God is not in man then he is not anywhere; and if man does not make heaven in his heart he will not experience it anywhere. This is a pessimistic view, say you? No. For me it is the essence of Optimism. ¶ I waste no time dreaming about the heaven to come. I do not care if I never see another heaven than this. ¶ I waste no time

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trying "to be good," so as to get to heaven when I die. I want to do my duty to my fellows, that is all. Not that I may have their praise, but that I may know I have given expression truthfully and naturally to the voice of Nature speaking in and through me. Better that my physical body were dead than that I should harness my thoughts to a foolish belief that God is in all space and yet not in the live, pulsating hearts of the creatures of His handiwork. Sad, indeed, the thought that the Infinite should fill all space, and ignore the Being created in his own image. Every atom of the universe is God in the atom.

This thing we call sin is the result of man's abuse and misuse of the God in all. To teach that man is full of sin is an absurdity. He is no more sinful than the Creator, if he follows the course of Nature and lives true to the God within. When I am true to myself and express the Truth as it seeks expression through me, then I am in harmony with the Divine in Nature, for then I have suppressed nothing. Suppression is the one great evil. There is none other like it, in that growth is stifled by it, and when we stop growing, we die (though we may not be buried), and are no longer fit instruments through which Life may speak.

As I sit in the sunshine on the green hillside, with a scene of beauty before me, I know my God is here. In the grass at my feet; in the flowering weed by my side; in the cricket singing under the stone to my right, and the cow bellowing for supper to my left; in the barking dog, the cackling hen, and the croaking frogs over there—in it all I see God as much as in

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myself. ¶ All is at peace, and there is harmony everywhere.

It were shameful heresy to accuse God by Nature of thrusting into Being human forms of life capable of Divinity, with all the attributes of God, and then brand them as unworthy of anything but eternal damnation.

With this teaching coming to us from the dark ages of the past, and with the thought hammered into man by self-appointed saint and priest, is it any wonder—is it at all strange—that man should throw up his hands and go laughingly to hell in his dissoluteness? This may sound harsh. It may be bad orthodoxy. But it is the untarnished Truth as I feel Nature expresses it through me. And my cry is one of joy, for Nature has unfolded another bud of expression, thus serving herself and bringing to greater perfection the great plan of the universe.

¶ A good Presbyterian pastor once asked me: "If you were to teach a child of spiritual things, how would you do it: would you recognize that child and teach it as a sinless being, or would you teach it as if it were a sinful being?" My reply was simple: "I would teach it as if speaking to a sinless being."

¶ All men and women who have had anything to do with training boys and girls will bear me out in this: if you would bring out the best in a child treat it as if it were good and capable of better things. Treat a child as a sinful thing and he will be sinful. What is true of the child is true of the man. Let any school or society—call it church or what you will—drill into

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the mind of man the impression that he is totally unworthy; that he, in contradistinction to all other forms of life, is so untrue to Nature, or to the Universal Life, that the Supreme Being—the Power Over All—has foreordained his damnation, and what do we have? Why, man, believing himself to be lower in the scale of life than the beasts of the field, the insects, the birds, the creeping and swimming things, and even the flowering and fruit-bearing plant life—for none of these has a standing quarrel with God—man deliberately accepts the judgment passed upon him without a hearing and makes the most of it.

We are taught from the cradle to the grave to look upon our Brother Christ as one whose infinite love prompted him to give his life for sins he never did commit. Why, my dear brother, what greater sacrifice did Jesus Christ make than that made by hundreds of men who have incurred the displeasure of the church since his day? What did he more than they? He was nailed to the cross, while in the dark days of the Inquisition men as faithful and as heroic as he were burned alive at the stake, turning their faces away from the crucifix held to their lips by the priests who prayed for them and fired the fagots in the name of God.

Oh, no; let us not load our minds with thoughts of man's inferiority to other mediums of Nature, ordained by the Being or Power we call God, to express more perfectly His infinite mind, and for the larger unfoldment of his great love.

Get close to yourself, brother, sister; see the great

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possibilities that lie within you. You are not poor, and miserable! You are the divinest thing made! Not to be ever awhining at, and quarreling with, Nature and with God! He will not quarrel with you. Why should you quarrel with him?

Why should we form ourselves into a society to inculcate that foolish notion that God is a something far, far away, and yet everywhere, filling all space, and yet not in man? Why should we leave to the trees, the plants, the birds, the insects, the animals and the reptiles the unfoldment of Nature, while we, the higher mediums for the expression of Nature's handiwork, debase ourselves and go about with the cry, "Unclean! Unclean!" upon our lips.

Think sinfulness of yourself and you will be sinful. Think Godliness of yourself and you will act Godly.

WHEN you hear another spoken of disparagingly by a crowd of men or women you may put it down as a sure thing that the absent one has much merit; for when people are courageous enough to bunch their opinions of him in the other fellow's absence, he must have many good qualities.

IF it were not for the little jealousies and petty strifes that pester life in a small community, we might ask Jesus to come over and visit us.

DONT NURSE THE BABY WRONG

"What! would'st thou have a serpent
sting thee twice?"



IT IS mighty dangerous business to nurse a wrong—dangerous, because if we allow our minds to dwell on the evils our neighbor has done us, we become like him. It is impossible to rise higher than our thoughts. No man is perfect, God knows; all have faults. And yet, knowing this, it is none the less difficult to think as much of a man after we have discovered in him some hidden weakness as we did before. But our true nobility is shown, not in calling attention to that weakness, but, rather, in drawing the curtain on the scene of weakness, and, looking deeper, discovering the good lying beneath: for as sure as God made man, there is goodness in every one. It is our fault if we fail to discover it. Isn't it better for us to seek diligently to find what we know ought to be there, though we may not know at the time just where, than to jump at the fault that everybody can see and repeat what everybody knows?

When I was spending some years in

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the northern mining country, I was impressed deeply by the incessant, hopeful work of the prospector. He rolls his blankets, and with a skillet, a tin pail, a piece of bacon, some beans, flour, salt and pepper on his back starts for the hills. He never knows how long he will be gone, nor what hardships he will encounter before he returns. He only knows that he is going to prospect a mineral zone for a ledge that carries precious metal—gold, silver, copper, or galena. He knows the formation is right; knows the metal is there somewhere, and starts in to find it. Others have been over the ground and found nothing. Perhaps a piece of float has been discovered, but, after weeks of searching and finding nothing, they have concluded that the good piece was carried there from some other locality by a glacier or landslide, and give up the search. But the man who knows will not give up. The prospector finds the wash deep, and the float comes only now and then. For days he digs about without finding anything to give him encouragement. But he keeps digging. Over and over the ground he goes. He knows it ought to be there: the formation is true. But, alas; for weeks and months and sometimes years he seeks on. Then one day when all but discouraged he strikes his pick into the ledge that opens in an ore-body, which has been hidden from the critical eye of man for decades by only a few inches of surface wash—and he is rich—rich, indeed!

We can afford to take a lesson from the life of the prospector, in our search for the good in our fellow-man. I think the heart of every man has a pay-shoot

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of rich ore that would be a blessing to humanity, and to himself, if discovered and developed. The wash may not be so deep as the surface indicates. Perhaps you have missed it in your brother by only a few inches. I have known rich shoots of ore to be lost by the thickness of a layer of talc, and mines have been abandoned as worthless, when only a few inches to right or left of the wall of the workings a rich body of ore was lying, waiting to be uncovered. ¶ Look more diligently; perhaps it will be necessary for you to drill deeper.

¶ Know this: the formation is right—the ore ought to be there!

AGE AND DEPENDENCE.

"Without a grave, unknelled, unconfined and unknown."
—Byron.

WHEN grandpa gets old, and the fringe of gray circling his bowed head grows thinner and ever thinner; when the eyes become dim, the hearing faint, and his step faltering; when the mind cannot grasp the new or hold fast to the old; when ambition, faith, hope and love are running low, and the spark of Life becomes ever more faint; then we realize as never before that without these virtues—in a word, without youth—man is, after all, only a small piece of misery of few years and little worth. Only a vitalized clod—a whimsical, selfish thing without the instinct of the

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animal and yet with insatiable habits of greed and grouch.

With old age man falls back again to the infant stage, but cannot carry with him the charms of babyhood. Instead, having added to his peevish nature the passions and weaknesses of an indulgent life, he bears upon his shoulders the cross of having lived. ¶ We coo and coddle the child, but the old man goes to and fro, unhappy, unnoticed, unmourned. He is treated scornfully by the son, and the aged mother, who all but gave her life for the boy, receives scant love. Oh, yes; I know. In youth we forget that the day will come when we, too, shall become old and feeble, and in the way—and perhaps alone. Then shall we, too, ask the bread of sympathy, and receive a stone; then shall we seek the companionship of those we would love, and, alas, find the fountain of love closed to us. Our passions, our whims, our fancies, shall refuse to down, because all these years we have failed to exercise love toward those who needed our tenderest thought and consideration. Then shall we sorrow as the old folks sorrow now.

IT is a common error to accuse another of inconsistency, or worse, when he has the boldness to do things not in harmony with our own way of thinking and doing. Every man has his own way of look-

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ing at things—or should have—independent of what others may have. And our attitude toward any accepted form of worship, or the indulgence of any passion, depends on our state of health and the nature of our early training. The man whose digestive apparatus works without causing pain and uneasiness, seldom troubles himself about the inconsistencies to be found in his own life, or in the lives of others. But to the man or woman whose love is a problem in mathematics, and whose soul a problem in metaphysics, no person will appear consistent who ventures beyond the narrow confines in which the holy one stews. But to the man of Universal Love; whose heart, and soul are attuned to the God in Nature, in man, in life, in death, in things present, and things to come—to him, all is consistency. There isn't any inconsistency when we know all. To know all is to forgive all, for then there is nothing to forgive. It is a distressing thing when one can see only inconsistency and sin in another's contrary opinion. The man who does things has no time to waste in thinking about consistency, in himself or his neighbor. The trouble with most people who complain of another's inconsistency is that they never have experienced a healthy, full-lunged inhalation of the Spirit of Love. Like the Jews—the holy Jews—of long ago, they brand a man a blasphemer and an evil-doer because he will not stop in his development until they catch up. ¶ Nothing is totally bad that God has made and allows to live.

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PLAYING AT VIRTUE.

"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer."—Horace.

WHEN a man confesses that he is a thief and is convicted of a crime, there is no logical reason why he should be ostracised from society. The mere fact of his being a thief should not preclude the consideration of his other qualities. When we know a man as a doctor, or a minister, or a carpenter, or an artist we do not stop at that. We admit that he may also be a violinist, or a singer, or a poet, and we credit him accordingly. And so, if the world condemns you for being a thief it should at the same time admire you for being a genius. If it fails to admire you for one thing it has no right to condemn you for another. We hear the man or woman condemned for some small act of indiscretion that amounts to very little. In a moment of weakness he or she of our acquaintance commits an act against the established laws of society, or what we consider to be right and wrong, and at once we are prepared to shy a stone and cry, begone! Blinded by prejudice, we will not consider his or her many good qualities, but center our whole gaze upon the one act of folly or weakness and magnify it many times. Then we take the brush from the pot of passion and paint in letters of red the judgment of the damned over the humble cottage door. And think, ye Gods! that we have done our duty!

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Who gave to us to be judge of another? Who gave to us to say what is sin in anyone but ourselves? All men and all women are more or less of a sham. As we look upon them we do not see the real person. We see them as we think they are. At heart all are sincere; we cannot escape that fact. And yet, I play at virtue just as you do, and all the while entertain lustful desires. Fain would I lift my soul into the Realm of Day, but prone am I to nestle in the passionate embrace of Indulgent Night. We condemn readily, not that we feel any real injury because of the offense, or that condemnation is necessary, but because it is fashionable. And we do it as if we had a right!

We do not seek to see the goodness in others as we ought. Nor do we show to others the goodness that is in ourselves. Our Inner Life seldom is brought in contact with the Inner Life of the man by our side. Beneath this life of sham we hide the Real, and, I do not know, but I believe, that that Real is God.

I WOULD rather know that I have the confidence of one friend who understands me, than be pestered by the applause of the multitude, who are tickled today, plucked tomorrow, and damned the next day.

HERSY ^{TODAY}_{TOMORROW} ORTHODOXY

"The fools who came to scoff remained to pray."—Goldsmith.



HIS world is full of incongruities.

When we think we have found the correct thing and begin to pride ourselves on having at last made a discovery, we soon are disappointed on finding that what we believed was new and nearly perfect has many unsatisfying features about it, and is really not new at all, but quite old. We find real satisfaction in one thing only, and that one thing is in Being Natural—living as though there were nothing new under the sun, and in the knowledge that to know one's self is to know mankind.

The all important thing for a man is, first, to make sure of growth. This is not so easy, for it is natural for us to be somewhat anxious to know that our conduct is in correct keeping with the common verdict of what is just proper. We are slow to perceive that advancement means initiative, and are prone to cling to the old order of things, because in this there is less friction. We are much concerned lest Sarah Jane or

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Father Church should think we are inconsistent should we follow the dictates of the heart, and go contrary to what Sarah Jane or Father Church has considered the proper thing for us to do. Thus we leave many things undone that we ought to have done, and oft-times go contrary to the heart's desire for fear of what Sarah Jane or Father Church might think of us. And in so doing we please them greatly and remain quite orthodox. And that is all.

¶ Orthodoxy is defined as "soundness in opinion and doctrine." But to be orthodox does not mean to be sound in opinion and doctrine. It means to be sound on what is at the time considered to be sound opinion and doctrine. But yesterday's heresy is today's orthodoxy.

When Bruno went contrary to the established beliefs in his astronomical findings, orthodoxy came forward and burned him alive. When Capernicus advanced his views about the movement of the earth and stars around the sun, he delayed publishing his findings for twelve years owing to his fear of the unpopularity which the work threatened to bring him, it being so unorthodox. Owing to the heretical nature of Galileo's scientific discoveries he was imprisoned and persecuted by orthodoxy. ¶ Thus it ever has been and ever will be. The man who is courageous enough to step out and away from the orthodox way of thinking must ever run the gauntlet of abuse from those who insist that he is heretical. Galileo said, "I am inclined to believe that the intention of the Sacred Scriptures is to give to mankind the information necessary for their

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salvation. But I do not hold it necessary to believe that the same God who has endowed us with senses, with speech, with intellect, intended that we should neglect the use of these, and seek by other means for knowledge which these are sufficient to procure for us." ¶ And because he said things like this he was denounced as "atheist" and "infidel," epithets, by the way, "which do not frighten us much now, since they have been applied to most of the really great and good men who have ever lived." Pope Paul V. had Galileo thrown into a dungeon because he would not disavow that the earth revolved around the sun.

When Charles Darwin advanced his theory of evolution, he was reviled by bigots, and ridiculed by all the world; but he lived to see it irrefragably established in science and inseparably incorporated into the common thoughts of men. When his "Origin of Species" was published, and the tongue of orthodoxy had been set wagging, Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, in the course of a speech on another subject in London, denounced "those enemies of the Church and Society who make covert attacks upon the Bible in the name of Science." Toward the close of his remarks he happened to spy Huxley, the deep thinker of England, seated in the audience, and, pointing his finger at him "begged to be informed if the learned gentleman was really willing to be regarded as the descendant of a monkey?" ¶ The audience insisted on hearing Huxley when the Bishop ceased to speak, and the greatest scientist of the age came forward. Huxley lacked the exuberance that characterized the florid

speech of the Bishop, but he knew his theme and the Bishop did not. He demolished the Bishop's card house point by point, correcting his gross misstatements, and ending by saying that "since a question of personal preferences had been brought into the discussion of a great scientific theme, he would confess that if the alternative were a descent on the one hand from a respectable monkey, or on the other hand from a Bishop of the Church of England who could stoop to misrepresentation and sophistry, and who had attempted in that presence to throw discredit upon a man who had given his life to the cause of science, then if forced to decide he would declare in favor of the monkey." In so saying Sir Thomas H. Huxley was unorthodox, but he was right. ¶ Whatever we may think of Charles Darwin's theory of the "Origin of Species," we may know this, that he was a man infinitely superior in intellect and learning, and also in heart, to the exponents of bigotry who, like the Bishop of Oxford, reviled and abused him. Charles Darwin was big enough to say this: "I feel most deeply that this whole question of creation is too profound for human intellect. A dog might as well speculate on the mind of Newton. Let each man hope and believe what he can."

All things are pure and consistent to the man who is big enough to break away from the confines of what we term orthodoxy, and is not shackled by prudery and bigotry. But let a man adopt this principle in his daily social and business life, that he will walk with no other guide than his God, and he will find

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that his conduct will not be in accord with orthodoxy. The first stone that is thrown at him will come from the Amen corner. Let a man take God into his business as familiarly as he takes the hand of a friend; let him feel that his bedchamber is as holy as the pulpit, and that the most menial service is as important as preaching the gospel, and his bishop, like the Bishop of Oxford, will fling at him his shaft of ridicule.

WHEN we feel that our's is a hard lot, it is well to remember this: If the man Jesus had been given a fine home, where he would be pampered and waited upon, he would not have got close enough to the heart of the world to have become its savior.

IT is easier to damn than to forgive; and since "man makes God in his own image," he teaches, and is more ready to believe, that God has chosen the lesser virtue rather than exercise the greater.

WHEN we move close to nature, we throw off the frills and foibles that man has added as necessities to life, and become kings of that simple life that the world thinks is greatness.

THE EMPTINESS OF SACRIFICE

"I have not loved the world, nor the world me."—Byron.



IT always gives me a pang of sorrow when I hear good men tell of the "sacrifice" this one made for that one, but much more when I hear from pulpit and press the wail about the "sacrifice" made by Jesus Christ for his brother man. To think that man should be so blinded by custom as to delude himself into believing that service means sacrifice, is to me the most sorrowful thing. I once heard an eminent Presbyterian divine preach a sermon on the terrors of a Christian life. He went on to say that from the cradle of what he characterized as man's second birth, to the grave, the Christian's life was one continuous line of trial and tribulation, sacrifice and disappointment, and in the end, the faithful scarcely are saved! In the face of an optimism that makes man in the image of his God, we have this pessimism that makes him a slave not worth saving. And we cannot but wonder that two sincere men can hold such divergent views. But they do. And one is as honest and ear-

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nest in seeking to know the Truth as the other. But let us see for ourselves. What has your experience been? What has been the experience of those faithful souls we all have met whose lives have been, and are being spent practically in the service of humanity? "My yoke is easy, my burden light," said He, the Prince of Saviors; and thus other saviors coming after Him have also spoken. Why, then, do we insist on making the yoke grievous and the burden heavy? All is gain; all is joy; when we live a natural life amongst our fellows. To act justly and with mercy, doing our duty daily because it is our duty, is better than sacrifice.

Take the testimony of those men and women the world over, whose lives have been a practical exemplification of the principles of brotherly love, and whose object in life is to serve mankind; do they tell of laborious days of sacrifice and sorrow? Do they complain of what it has cost them? Not at all. Theirs is one long, happy experience of service, and therefore of unfoldment and love. They never know the meaning of the word sacrifice—those manly men and womanly women. Every moment, every hour, every day, they live quietly, joyfully, sincerely,—always ready to act in the service of their fellows,—no pining for something better; no room, no desire, for more joy; no thought of reward, here or hereafter. They seek to serve, that is all. And their reward is in having done something for another. ¶ The teaching that service means sacrifice is a curse that came with the law about the time of Moses, and which mankind has

not yet outgrown. To grow we must serve. When we feel that we are sacrificing something in order to serve another, it is time we sought to get the devil selfishness out of us. The Man Jesus sacrificed nothing when he gave his life upon the tree! It was the only way left for him to demonstrate his love for mankind, and He gained as much as we in the exercise of that love. The lover always is the winner, whether his love is reciprocated or not. If I love you, I gain more by giving expression to my love than you do in being loved by me. We never can love another while we hold within us anything of Self-ish-ness. A heart big enough to push the oceans out of their beds would not be big enough to hold love of self and love for another at the same time. And so, when we have self love we shall not have the desire to serve, therefore, what we do for our fellows will be done with the hand out behind.

But how differently the thought of service comes to the man who can forget himself in the transaction, whatever it be, and does the thing because it helps others to get it done. ¶ I do not know of a more striking example of the indwelling of this Universal Love, than that which was found in the life of Henry Clay Trumble, who was known for many brilliant achievements: in the field of letters, of exploration, of research; as an army chaplain, as a public speaker of national prominence; thirty years an editor and writer, whose name is a household word in three continents. In a personal letter written two years before his death to a friend whom he had helped by his kind counsel

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and penetrating inquiries, he said: "You know I am just now, and for about two years have been a 'Shut-in,' unable to move without assistance; but it is good to feel that God enables me still to do something in his service for others. I have published two little books from this room, and I have two or three more that I hope will be of service. I could not have done this, had I been able to do my usual work in my office."

The friend did not know up to the time of the receipt of that letter that Mr. Trumble was a "shut-in," unable to move without assistance, although he had been favored by Mr. Trumble with his earnest, thoughtful personal letters once or twice a month for more than two years. In all his letters there was that charm of unselfishness, coupled with a deep, abiding faith in his fellows, and a burning desire to serve; but never one word about his own condition, and not the inkling of a thought about sacrifice. It was all joyous service—because his heart was in his work.

DON'T be a skimmer! Get into the heart of things. It's the digging and delving that develops a man. Ease has killed more men than effort.

THERE won't be any shadows to frighten you, Sweetheart, if your face is toward the Sun.

AS A MAN THINKETH

"There is no man suddenly either excellently good, or extremely evil."—Sir Philip Sidney.



THE suspicious man is a slave of what we call the devil. He suspects every man of entertaining an evil motive; believes no man is sincere; and considers that every man has his price. Such a person is to be pitied. Fortunately he is greatly in the minority. He is one that has narrowed life down to the four walls of a hog's pen. Manhood to him is an unknown quantity. He believes that trickery and deceit are the stock and trade of all men, and in order to protect himself against the duplicity of his fellows, he thinks he must keep himself in that attitude of suspicion that holds him away from the blessings that come through entertaining thoughts of fellowship and trustfulness towards others.

I believe there is much of God in every man—and some of the devil, too. But I believe the God in man has the supremacy, for all the world is God, and God is therefore all powerful; whereas, the devil gets there by growth of our indulgences, which may be overcome by chang-

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ing one's Ideal, and by switching from evil practices to helpful practices.

There is no trait of the devil so subtle and so sure of results as that to be found in the suspicious man or woman. "We awaken in others the same attitude of mind we hold towards them." We see ourselves reflected in them. If our eye is evil we will see evil in all things. No matter how innocent the action of another may be; no matter how honest and sincere the motive; if we have occasion to rub up against the suspicious man, either in business or social life, we will find our veracity doubted and our sincerity questioned. Pity it is that it is so. Not that Truth is ever injured by the conduct of the suspicious man, for that cannot be. Truth will live in spite of every suspicion, no matter in whom it is found; the utterances of any Jackanape or society of Jackanapes cannot disturb it. "The wild thyme is itself, nor asks consent of rose nor reed." But what I hold true is this: When Truth is doubted; when it is reviled; there is occasion for pity, for then she turns away, and bestows upon another the blessing she had for you and me. In the transaction we lose; Truth does not.

The man who is least suspicious of others, and I think this holds true of woman also, will be found the most worthy himself. He has been through the darkness; he has lived; he knows. He has learned to trust others by being taught to trust himself. ¶ He has had faith; that is it. He has exercised it in himself, and in others. Faith is at the bottom of all friendship, all learning, all wisdom, and all success. When we lose

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faith in a friend, we suffer, for in our exercise of faith we gain more than the one in whom the faith is exercised. When a man loses his faith in learning and wisdom; in his fellows and in himself; he is the great loser. Faith is the outgrowth of the noblest that is in us. Without faith man is not a whit higher than the hog. With it—in abundance—he is only a step below God. Thus we see, how great the privilege that is ours, and how great the responsibility.

The fault-finding individual may be absolutely sincere and of kind disposition. He simply exhibits a lack of faith. If it isn't in the town he lives in it is in the house. If not in the house then in the neighbors. If not in the neighbors, then in the government. If not in the government, then in himself. He sees things through an evil eye.

WHAT BUZZ-SAWS DO

"Let us do, or die."—Burns.

WHAT a pity; and yet how natural that it is so! The man who bumps into a buzz-saw, blames the buzz-saw for cutting him.

¶ Here is a thought for you to carry home: If you don't like to be torn to pieces by a buzz-saw, keep out of the buzz-saw's way. It is not an original thought, but how slow you and I are to take it to ourselves.

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The buzz-saw has its business, which is to cut things. If it is strong, and sharp and slick and clean it makes a clean cut. If it is dull and rusty and wabbles in its center, it makes trouble, and men curse it. ¶ True, men curse it, too, when they get hit by it, though it do good work, but only those who have got in its way.

Note this: the buzz-saw does not reach out after trouble. It simply is, and because it is, men, when they get tired quarreling with themselves, quarrel with it. No buzz-saw can be a buzz-saw and not cut. When it fails to cut, it is thrown into the scrap pile and sold for old iron. This is what we get out of it: Each man is born to go through life and carry with him his own personality. He may be "peculiar," as others see him, but let him be true to himself—his character—and everything about him will be symmetrical, harmonious. Whatever he is engaged in will bear the stamp of his personality—the very man himself breathes in and through his work. His joys, his sorrows, his aims and ambitions; his heart, his soul, will speak to you in what he does. He lives one moment at a time; whether you find him in light or in shadow, in toil or at ease, he is the same man. Thus are all men when they are filling the Divine purpose.

¶ But take that man of strong personality, and let him hide himself under the cloak of popular custom; let him suppress his "peculiarities," and think, and say, and do, and be, just what would most please his friends; and, presto! What is it now! Why, just a hand-me-down—a piece of man for the scrap pile—something to be discarded because it has failed to do

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its work. The personality is gone, leaving only the man animal remaining—the God is out of him.

I do not know: I may be mistaken. According to the orthodox way of thinking, I am mistaken: but it always has seemed to me, even from early childhood, that the wrong conception has been placed upon man's privilege in relation to what we call his religion. The tendency of orthodoxy is to shape all men in the same mould: to make them think alike, pray alike, praise alike, and, so far as possible, appear alike. Men conduct themselves about as they please during "business" hours, but so long as they are regular attendants at "Divine" service they are considered "solid" on religious matters. We hear men talk of their business and their work as if their occupation were something separate and apart, and altogether distinct from their religion. Yes, and do you know, I have heard some surprisingly good people say of this one or that: "Mr. So-and-So is so engrossed in his business that he never can find time to do this, that or the other thing"—some "religious service," for instance. As if his religion and his work were two distinct things, demanding the exercise of different qualities of his nature! Now, listen, dear heart, I would not say a word to cause a brother or sister to lose ever so small a particle of faith in any belief that has given comfort to the soul, but did you never think how absurd it is to suppose that a man is going to win his paradise in some way distinct and apart from the service he renders to humanity. And that service must be in giving expression to his Divine personality.

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IF I SHOULD DIE TONIGHT

"Here Skugg lies,
Snug as a bug in a rug."—Franklin.

"GOING home to die!" How blessed the thought, and yet with it there comes a tinge of sorrow, even to the happiest of us. But why the sorrow? ¶ Oh, the peace that will come to the heart, so tattered and torn by the storms of life, and the body racked with pain; the shoulders stooped from carrying the burdens of this dear old work-a-day world!

Going home to die, did you say? God speed you! The doors are open to receive you, and there in a shady nook the old arm chair awaits you, pillowed with innumerable cushions, soft and rose-scented; and by its side a little chair for mother. Going home! Ah, who would stay away? And die! Why not? 'Tis but a step forward—out into the valley where all titles are snuffed, and we travel on the passport of life's deeds; wending our way to the New Jerusalem. A tear! What's that for? At parting! Who said we would part? Yes, yes; we may never meet again in these old hulks of ours: I may not hear your voice, and look into those weary eyes; I may not feel the pressure of your hand; but what does that matter? I know you will be there, somewhere, and where you are, there shall I be also. We can be closer then e'en than now; yes, much closer.

Then why those tears? 'Tis harder, and the responsibility is greater, to live today as I ought to live than die. To die is nothing; to live is all. I go to my bed

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and sleep: a dream comes over me, and I am transported from this world to fairy land. I walk and talk to others—they talk and walk with me. My body and senses are dead; perhaps as dead as they ever shall be—who knows? There is no pain; I do not have any fear. After a time I go back into this old hulk; consciousness returns, and I awake to begin anew the duties of life.

Some day I shall steal away from this body of mine and will walk and talk to others; they will talk and walk with me; and I shall be so happy I will not come back. Then they will say, "He's dead." And friends will be mournful and sad, and enemies cheerful and glad; and just over there where the flowers are most beautiful and fragrant, and the birds sing sweetest, I will be doing the thing I ought to do, and praising God!

THE CARPENTER'S SON

"There was a laughing devil in his sneer."—The Corsair.

FIND a man who thinks alone—who forgets himself and strives only to do the thing as nearly right as it can be done—who is ready to sacrifice himself and all that he has, or is to have, in order to do it—find him, I say, and you have found a genius. Look him over carefully. Perhaps he is a very good fellow; perhaps genial; but surely just an ordinary man. He may wear a blue rough shirt, with sleeves rolled up to

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the elbows. It little matters. When you have found him, and satisfied yourself that you have seen many a man finer looking than he; that he isn't such an extraordinary individual after all; just shut your eyes a minute. Now open them again! The man is gone, and in his stead before you stand his defamers. They always follow close at his heels. They, like yourself, have also been disappointed in his appearance. They expected to see a show, not the genius; forgetting that to see a genius one must be a genius. They, like you, again, are struck with wonder that a genius could look so common, and the cry goes up: "Isn't this the carpenter's son?" and at once the crown of thorns is cut for him.

IF you have made up your mind that you are not going to reach heaven until Death calls, you will search a long while for it.

WHEN we condemn a man unheard we do ourselves a great injustice, in that we blind ourselves to his virtues.

MANY a man has got a hard fall from standing on so thin a thing as his dignity.

IT is no sin to worship at the shrine of female loveliness—if you do not make it so.

CROWDING^{THE}TOTEM POLE

"He was a man
Who stole the livery of the court of Heaven
To serve the devil in,"—Pollock.



HAVE said before, and I will here repeat, that it is psychologically impossible for a person to grow in knowledge so long as he clings to the false notion that he is too stupid to learn. The boy and girl who leads the class in school is not the one who comes regularly before the teacher with the plea, "I can't." No man ever accomplished anything worthy in business, learning or art, with the stamp of inability upon him. No progress can be made until we lose sight of our defects and come into the knowledge that we can do things. Confidence, whether in the school room or the counting room, is the power that makes for progress and development. I CAN bottoms all physical and mental growth. It is, indeed, the secret of all growth, whether moral, physical, mental or spiritual.

To teach the child at its mother's knee that it is sinful, and to follow this thought on through life, is the greatest curse that humanity has afflicted upon itself. The belief be-

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comes a habit, and all through life harasses the manhood of the race. Impressing upon the plastic child mind that it is a miserable object of God's mercy; that it is habitually doing the things it ought not to have done, and leaving undone the things it ought to have done, and that there is no help in it, is downright cruelty. Such a crude notion about man's soul unfoldment is painful to witness.

I remember one day at a little Sunday-school service in a mining camp, a minister of the Established Church was present, and the simple-hearted superintendent called upon him to lead the school in prayer. The unfortunate man did not have his prayer book with him, and was lost to know what to pray for. He mumbled a jumble of words, and closed with a loud "A-h-men." At the close of the service the parson warned the superintendent never to ask him to offer prayer again when he did not have his prayer-book along. The warning was quite unnecessary, for there was not a ten-year-old boy or girl in the school that could not have spoken the feelings of the heart more freely to the worshipful God than did that priest, who was supposed to "lead" the flock.

¶ When men are brought up in the belief that service is a matter of sound and symbols, rather than of feeling and doing, and are taught from early childhood that spiritual growth is measured by one's glibness in mumbling the prayers prepared by priests of rhetorical tongue and steel heart, they are drawing dangerously near the fig leaf period and crowding close the totem pole.

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AT THE BECK OF FASHION

"And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
Is pride that apes humility."—Coleridge.

HOW prone men are—and women too—to do things it is considered "proper." Dame Fashion decrees that the waist shall assume a wasplike slenderness, and on goes the corset. Custom tells man it is quite the thing to sip the booze and suck the amber and up goes the whisky and tobacco bill.

If allowed freedom of thought and action—I was going to say that—but it is hazardous to say what woman would do. She might and she might not. I do not know. But, giving her the benefit of the doubt, it is probable she would not go to the extreme that fashion demands. She does not do so because she enjoys it. She does so to be like others. Men do not saturate themselves with alcohol and nicotine because their bodies need it. They do not throw into themselves stuff that a hog would grunt at and turn tail to because they like it. They do so because others do it.

Man and his mate are the only creatures under heaven that will do what they know will injure their bodies and brains and impair the health of their offspring. Any other animal, fowl, insect or reptile will observe instinctively the thing wherein safety lies, and will not depart from the law that nature has made. Not so with man and woman. Those things that all sane men know will steal away their brains and deaden ambition, are taken with a certain bravado, as if there were a spark of manliness in making of oneself a fool.

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I do not know, but I am led to believe that when men and women learn to appreciate their unlimited possibilities, and realize fully that they are gods in the chrysalis, they will quit this aping servility, this slavish bowing of the knee to fashion's foibles, and strive to make each life real and absolutely true. We but show our weaknesses when we confess by our acts that we cannot rise above the prevailing wills and customs of our day. Any woman can be a Tittering Jennie where all the rest are Tittering Jennies, but it takes the real virtues of strong womanhood to make of oneself a Florence Nightingale. Anything that wears pantaloons and a whisker can acquire the cigarette habit, with cocktail and red curtain attachments; Nature is as ready to help a fool be a fool, as she is to assist a Solomon to be a greater than Solomon.

ENTHUSIASM AND THE GENIUS

"I awoke one morning and found myself famous."—Byron.



HE conformist is a man who will not grow. The non-conformist is a man who will not stop growing. The enthusiast is a non-conformist, with vitality plus. The enthusiastic boy is the pride of his father, and his mother's joy. Everybody else likes him, too. His enthusiasm is recognized as vigorous, open-hearted honesty. It is intensified gladness: life plus, with bubbles on the side. But enthusiasm in Little Bill and enthusiasm in Big Bill are two distinct commodities: one commands the applause of all men, and the other the haw-haws of the gallery, and the snickers of the parquet. Men who do not understand have a peculiar dislike for the enthusiastic individual. ¶ He is too blamed anxious to be a-doing things to please the man satisfied to let well enough alone. There are some men so dried up by jealousy and jaundice as not to understand the connecting link between the enthusiast and the genius. And some men are quite

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alarmed when their friends hint at enthusiasm in connection with their name and work.

The fact is, there is just a step between the enthusiast and the genius. The enthusiast is laughed at for his earnestness; while the genius is applauded for his enthusiasm. The only real difference between them is that one has caught the world's applause, while the other is honored by its sneers. It is just a question of one's viewpoint to discover where the enthusiast leaves off and the genius begins. Today's sneers are quite often tomorrow's cheers. The enthusiast who is winked at today, may tomorrow be the genius on whose neck the world falls with eclat.

¶ To be an enthusiast, a man must exercise the zeal of a genius. He must have that intensity of earnestness; that strength and clearness of imagination; that honesty and boldness of heart, to stand unmoved amid all the jeers and cheers for what he holds to be true. A man must be morally and physically strong to be an enthusiast. He must be himself at whatever cost, and will cheerfully lose his life to save it. He throws not only his strength into his work, but also his personality, thus making his work a live thing to sing the praises of the man who made it, long after he is dead and buried. His body and his mentality are only the seed; the fruit of his life may not come until long years afterward.

The man who is afraid to be winked at—afraid to brave the rules of conformity—will never have occasion to alarm himself or his friends about the perils of greatness. An enthusiast finds himself everlast-

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ingly a knocker of dead men's idols. That means a life of trial, of hard work and fainting not. From the man Jesus all down the ages it has been the enthusiast who has kept the world in growing pains. He has put Life abundant into business, into society, into home, into community. The sum of all faith, all hope, all work, is enthusiasm. It has covered the earth with its accomplishments, while lack of it has brought ruin to a vast army of good men.

OUR THOUGHTS MAKE US

"Learn the luxury of doing good."—Goldsmith.

W HERE is the man who does not know that it is impossible to make oneself physically stronger, mentally clearer or spiritually deeper without exercise of the physical, mental and spiritual faculties. I saw an article in a magazine of recent issue which attempted to disprove the brain-food qualities of fish, and cited the mental condition of the Esquimaux and other fish-eating peoples, to show how absurd the belief. Without attempting to prove the brain-food qualities of fish meat, or meat of any kind, the writer would call attention to this fact, that brain development, like physical development, or soul development, depends entirely on the amount of exercise that is given to these faculties, and not on the character of

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food eaten. Anything tending to force the faculties into disuse retards their growth. To make life easy is to set it back. Through inactivity we lose our divine individuality, the only thing Godlike in us.

JOY OF EXPRESSING LIFE

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."—Ezekiel.

WHEN man reaches the atmosphere of the Divine, he will be Divine. And man may reach the atmosphere of the Divine just in proportion to the amount of unrestricted expression he permits Nature through him. Whether that will be in his present form and in this world, or in the future state, it matters little. He must grow into the Divine if he ever is to reach it.

There is one natural state. That is the Divine State of Nature. Any other state is as unnatural as it is fictitious, artificial. The trees and plants and flowers—all forms of life, vegetable, animal and mineral—are a part of that natural state; all are good, though none are perfect or can be perfect in this life; that is, everything is susceptible to further growth.

In the plant kingdom, was ever a bush budded and nursed to fruitage that bore the best that could be borne by that particular variety of bush or tree? And in the animal kingdom, was ever an animal—man

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or beast—born that achieved perfection, beyond which point none other could go? ¶ It is true that no standard of perfection may be set for man or beast or any other creeping or breathing thing. The human mind cannot grasp the meaning of perfection. And, since perfection cannot be grasped by the human mind, man cannot hope to reach it in his present condition. But he may ever grow into nearer perfection and eventually Nature must reach perfection through him.

I sometimes think that man, in his efforts to be what Nature did not intend him, is missing the joy of a life of expression. The height of all orthodox teaching is that man shall be good. But no two minds will agree as to what constitutes being good, or being bad; hence the man who wastes his time trying to “be good,” fails to express the life that Nature intends for him. I do not believe that Nature ever demands of man, animal or any living thing, something he is incapable of doing or being. Man himself has set the standard, and as a result it is one that restricts him and makes him untrue to the natural tendencies in him. All of Nature is not “good” in the sense that man is taught to be good. We have to take the storm with the sunshine; the evil with the good; the happy with the sad; the bitter with the sweet. Without “bad” there could not be any good; without sorrow no happiness; without rain no harvest. ¶ Had there been no crucifixion there would have been no salvation; without persecution, no Savior.

We cannot always understand; often we are gravely

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mistaken. We are mistaken because we think that God and Nature are perfect. Nature makes nothing perfect. Neither does God. The highest thing credited to Him—in fact, the thing made in His own image,—proved imperfect before it learned to know right from wrong.

And yet, everything was made to attain perfection. Everything must grow into perfection, and by a natural order of things.

The flower is taken in its wild state and by a succession of plantings and buddings is slowly brought to a higher state of beauty and usefulness. A similar process characterizes the growth of every other form of life. The dross is taken with the gold and by a succession of burnings and siftings the pure metal is brought forth.

Why should there be this continual striving by Nature, with man and without man, through him and independent of him, towards the goal of perfection? Is it because the Power we call God is made happier by seeing it done, or is it because Nature is the Power Itself and that we as men, and our brothers, the trees, the plants, the birds, the beasts and the things that crawl and creep and swim, all are expressions of the same Life through which He or It, or whatever it be—God—is striving for greater perfection? If All Nature is the seen—the tangible—expression of the Power That Is, and man is but a part or phase of that expression, then man is as near God today as he will be in any future state, and heaven then will be what heaven is today—now—and here.

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Life presents this law of compensation that we cannot escape. Nor should we want to. We draw down in exact proportion to the amount we put up. Nature never gives something for nothing. The price is asked and must be paid. All she asks, and all she gives, is a Square Deal. And so, when we are content to live our little day in weakness and folly, Nature concludes that we haven't much desire to do anything else and leaves us alone. But our refusal to act does not impair Nature's progress. She strives for greater expression and reaches greater perfection—without us if we will not allow it with us. ¶ We lose in the refusal. Nature does not.

I think the animals and insects and the plants and birds are happier than we because they act simply and without thought, and, therefore, give a truer expression of the Life that animates them.

While man is calling aloud to God for forgiveness, and trying to be good, the animals just feel that they never did quarrel with God and go right on living—true to the Expression of Life in them. And it does seem to me, that Life so expressed—true to the Nature of the vessel through which it comes,—is the life that counts in the long run, whether it be in man or beast, or the tiniest molecule in the One Great Whole.

A THOUGHT ON HILL CLIMBING

"But on and up, where Nature's heart
Beats strong amid the hills."—Milnes.



FRIEND writes for information. He says: "The position that I have selected to fill is not above me. I think I have chosen one that will indeed be an honor to me if success will crown my wishes, which I have perfect confidence that it will. What is it that I must do to prepare myself?"

¶ Keep hustling!

¶ In these two words we have the gist of it all. Keep hustling! Today—tomorrow—the next day—always! We have never done enough so long as there is more to do. It is not enough to choose a calling and wish for success. Plod on! Keep plodding! Don't stop to let someone pat you on the back for having decided what you want to be. It is well to have made a choice; yes, it is very well. But, dear Goodness! that isn't enough! Mercy, no!

Whatever your decision, look sharp that you do not spoil it by dwelling too long upon it. ¶ Nothing counts so much for community advancement as individual advancement: and nothing aids in the individual's

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advancement so much as the forgetfulness of self in the effort to advance the aim and object of the individual. All advancement is gradual. And at every step effort is required. Every effort requires strength, either of character or of mind and body, and with every exertion there is growth sufficient to prepare one for the next step.

It is always pleasing to hear an individual express a desire to run ahead of the pack. It is pleasing, because before there came that desire in the man's heart there was the awakening of the individual. And an awakened individual means one that is prepared to grow. But have a care! After the awakening there comes, first the testing time; then the waiting time; then the dark; then the light; and after this, wealth—not of soul, but of pocket. And herein is the test of endurance! All other trials are as nothing beside it. ¶ Oh, yes; that is true. When wealth of pocket comes, the common thought has it that therein comes Success, but poor, indeed, were Success if the accumulation of wealth were the acme of it all!

About the first thing that confronts a man who starts out on the road to Success is a disappointment. This is followed by disappointment number two, and number three, and four—and perhaps more. Things do not go the way you want them to. Then the weakling drops out and joins the croaking chorus. Complaints are laid at the head office, and all the while the fault is our own. We forget that somebody else is pleased if we are not; and that the world is quite as happy at

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their pleasure as it would be at our own; and so, in that broad, universal sense, it is just as well.

If you would win Success, leave croaking to the frogs; they can do it much better than you. If your doorway is dark, and your foresight poor; if you cannot see the bright side of the clouds overshadowing your path, go and immerse yourself in a bath tub; then go to bed. Tomorrow you will awake filled with radiating cheer, and prosperity will be budding on every bush. ¶ Boost yourself higher. No doubt the world can get along without you; but not so well as with you. If things are not coming your way, catch on, and get the most out of them as they fly by some other way. ¶ Think how lop-sided your life would be if all that is were yours, and came to you without any effort on your part. And if you would be one-sided with all, you would be one-sided with part—if it came to you without your putting forth any effort to get it. If you have to make no effort for what you have you lose the source of preparation for the next accomplishment, and without preparation you are sure to fail. To neglect preparation is to reject Success. ¶ There isn't anything else for it.

The man who is careless about keeping his appointments, lavish in his promises, and negligent in keeping them, whether he be preacher, teacher, banker, merchant or roustabout—and one calling is as honorable as the other, provided the man who fills it is as faithful to his trust as the other—I say the man who promises much and fails to come up with the goods, is doomed to stay a mediocre man—and he will deserve

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it. The sooner we realize this and wake up or stand aside and make room for another, the better will it be for us and everybody else.

Men are usually more ready to blame others for their failures than to acknowledge their own weakness. ¶ Adam started his sons off wrong in this respect—what did I tell you! ¶ They believe if they could just have things to their liking, they would do wonders! But, really, no man ever succeeded who was able to travel all the distance from start to finish in an automobile. No man could get up ambition enough to succeed in anything but a failure on a bed of roses. No doubt there be roses bordering the path of Success, but it is the thorns that spur a man on. ¶ Success is not easily won. ¶ It doesn't grow on low-hanging bushes.

The man who is always grumbling is always fumbling. While he is complaining of this difficulty and that, and bemoaning his lot, somebody else by his side is working out problems and surmounting difficulties greater far than his. And without a whimper! ¶ Why, bless you, friend; it never was intended that man should live without having obstacles to overcome. That story about Adam and Eve, and the "fall" of man, as we understand it, is a bit of moonshine. Life wouldn't be worth living if there were no trials to test us and give us more strength and courage. Every trial is a blessing. ¶ We plead for more grace, more faith, more love: and neglect to use what we have! Ask a professional gymnast what course to pursue that you may increase your muscular power, your agility

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and bodily grace. Will he tell you to go home and he will send the "how" by special delivery? Not much! He lays out a course for you to follow that compels you to exercise what strength you have. And you can get no more until you do. Thus we find it in all the faculties of the brain and heart. We grow strong in the things we exercise. That is why obstacles make for Success—if we overcome them. Each gives us more strength for the next.

The aim of every man is to succeed in achieving his standard of Success. What this standard is each man knows for himself, and keeps it to himself—or should. We talk about Success as if it were a mysterious Something always at the other end of a long-distance telephone. We feel that we can talk to it and about it, but cannot get in direct touch with it. This is a tremendous error. To succeed now—this moment—that is Success—the only Success worth striving for. Succeed in what? Why, in Service. In the measure we serve others, we succeed. ¶ In the words of Geo. Knox: "The more you give, the more you have left. Talent begets talent."

There are certain fundamental principles that every man must adhere to to be successful, no matter what legitimate business he is engaged in. First, there must be faith in God and Man. Many very pious people that I have known have had much faith in God, but treat their fellows as if every man were a rogue. Naturally they fail in everything they undertake. Then, to be successful it goes without saying that we must be honest: it is no secret that strict integrity is

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the foundation of every legitimate business success. Honesty begets honesty, just like love begets love. Then, too, we must not limit our ambition: work, not drudgery, but healthful, honest work is the price of all Success. In this, as in all things, if we "pay as we go" the price is not excessive. And then, too, we must depend on ourselves; exert our own ability; be economical, but not penurious; courteous, careful and thoughtful; and must never be defeated by defeat.

The man who is always apologizing; who shrinks from responsibility; who shirks, and sluffs and lops; who never dares to act independently, but waits to be shoved along, never will stand deuce high in anything. He is humanity's curse. The lazy man, and the man who is a living apology, needs no after punishment. They are already damned. God wants men who dare look him in the face; who can stand upright before the world and defy defeat.

To Succeed, then, let us be honest: own up like a man that you are the cause of what you apologetically call your "ill-luck." We fritter away valuable time each day. Failing to look sharp, we do not see the opportunities that are around us and they pass us by.

SIMPLICITY AND GREATNESS.

"The world knows nothing of its greatest men,"—Henry Taylor.

WHEN I was somewhat younger than I am today, and therefore less liable to discriminate, I was asked by a companion: "Hank, do you think you

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ever will be a great man?" The idea amused me, and I smiled audibly. Couldn't help it. ¶ It was so funny. ¶ Did you ever try to define greatness? You would fail if you did. If you could touch elbows with the men who have been known as great men, what character of man do you think you would find? Would you find greatness, as we understand it, personified? Indeed, you would not. You would find simplicity incarnate. ¶ The great man is he who does what lies before him now better than anyone else could do it, and he does it without thought of greatness. ¶ He does it to get it done. No man was made great in the twinkling of an eye. He may come into prominence suddenly. His name may never have been heard before, but all the while since boyhood he has been preparing for just the thing which is to bring him into prominence like a meteor. He was a great boy before he became a great man—great because he was wise enough to be content to be faithful in the duties devolving upon him as a boy. When a child, he was simply and truly himself. He acted for himself; he spoke for himself; he thought for himself; he was none other than himself—and did not want to be. He lived his own life as he understood it, regardless of the jeers of his enemies, and in spite of the applause of his friends. When misunderstood, he did not stop to complain nor to explain. He did what was next at hand. Thus he was as great in childhood as in his manhood, and as humble in one as the other. Doing what was before him as a child, however disagreeable it may have been, he grew into manhood in the spirit of duty

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doing. Preparation for the greater responsibilities came with the execution of the lesser.

The silly world applauds him as a man, because he has caught the public's fancy, but the time of his true greatness was when, as a boy, unknown to anyone but his schoolmates, and perhaps by them dubbed "Shortie," he used to do things just a little bit better than any of the other boys could do them.

Man wins greatness because he does not run after it. He does not think anything about it. All that he must care to know is, what is his duty, and, knowing it, he must do it. ¶ And he never can afford to think much about what the world is saying either of him or his duty. "Socrates won immortality because he did not want it," says Hubbard, "and the Sophists secured oblivion because they deserved it."

The man who thinks about being great, never is. "I am a man of some importance," said a caller at the Segnogram home one day. He may have been, I do not know; but it would have been an easy matter to mistake him for a common thing about the size of nuisance. ¶ If you and I are not great enough to luminate the drudgery of life in the simplicity of child-like faith, we never shall be great enough to draw the fire of the God of Genius. ¶ And if we are great enough, we shall not need to advertise the fact. And so, dear heart, be simple—be simple.

AND NATURE SMILES

"What a gloomy thing it is not to know
where to find one's soul."—Hugo.



WHY should there be so much that is contrary to nature in what man has created in his religious life? We are lost in wonder sometimes when we see with what ease Nature does things, and compare with it the policy of man in his aspirations to reach a plane beyond himself.

Nature never will give something for nothing. To reach a given point in life we must pass through certain stages of growth—certain discipline—certain training. ¶ We reach heaven through hell.

We do not expect in the child the understanding of the man. Nor do we look for a natural understanding in the man whose head has been turned in the direction of life's veneer. Therefore, when we see a man endeavoring to harmonize Nature Thoughts with those of the Unnatural, and striving to twist Nature into his poor, misshapen ideal of man, we pity him for his blindness, but we do not condemn him. Nature lets him go ahead; she does not become excited at his

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strenuous efforts, nor does she create a disturbance in her efforts to teach him a better way. She just allows him to go his way and do the best he can, without ever changing in ever so minute a degree her system. She knows that no effort can be entirely lost, and, while man may bring upon himself an ungodly amount of misery and woe, she is content to feel that all of it is required to bring him into a more natural state of being. And so she sits calmly enthroned behind the veil and looks on, knowing that one day man will recognize his folly and come to her for a clearer conception of life. She knows that man is doing the best he can with the light he has. She would help him do more but may not, owing to the man's unpreparedness, and his inability to perceive things in a natural way. She throws out this guard and that, to prevent him drifting away, often holding him in a prison cell, on a bed of sickness, or banishing him to the Isle of Patmos, where she might talk with him of the things he seeks so diligently to know, and yet which are too simple for him to learn in the superficiality of his position.

I sometimes think that Nature is what we know as the All Love. She is so big, so Infinite, so Divine, that every tiny particle of the What-Appears-to-Be-but-Is-Not is out of her, and she sits in all the majesty of her simplicity, the Queen of the Universe of the All Wise. She is so pure she never has known the absurdity of what man pictures within himself and calls sin; and so wise that she knows there isn't any right and wrong of things, but that all is right and

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good did we but have the heart and scope to understand. She would teach man the harmony of doing; that in service only is Life and that what man calls Death is nothing more than a transition from a lower to a higher form of expression.

I uncover the head to Nature. She is divinely good in that she does not interfere with man. She permits him to do as he will, knowing that in the doing, whether it be what we call good or bad, he grows into the Being Back of All.

She would assist him would he but let her. But Nature is not blind. She knows man better than he knows himself, and witnessing his efforts, and realizing how he has reversed the natural law of the universe in his efforts to accomplish her purpose, she hides her face in darkness and waits.

How long, oh God! how long! And all the while man continues to strive against Nature in the belief that he is fighting sin! Dear me! dear me! What a tremendous amount of energy is wasted in this old, old fight against the devil! What millions are spent in trying to swamp him! And all the while, Nature the Eternal, for whom all the fight is said to be made, utters never a word. While man and priest fling their voices loose on the desert air, Nature quietly, mysteriously works goodness up into life by giving expression to the Power Back of All. ¶ The sorrow of it is that while she is thus engaged, man is so engrossed in the fight against Expression—so determined to suppress the flow of the Abundant Life—that he fails

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to see beyond the insignificant, and wastes his substance on earth's stony places.

Why do some men get so much more out of life than others? The answer is simple: because they see so much more in life than others. They are in touch with Nature—feel the pulsation of Nature's heart; know her purpose; recognize her infinity—and on top of this—and this is the great point—they feel their kinship with her in all other forms of expression, and realize that they are the Infinite today and will be the Infinite tomorrow, wherever tomorrow is spent.

When we rise to a higher plane and look beyond the narrow valley in which orthodoxy has placed us; when we mount the peaks and see below the hills and valleys heretofore trodden by us; we lose ourselves in wonderment, for we see with new eyes the landscape of Nature Life. And those things that loomed so large; those weaknesses that caused us such pain and sorrow; those false notions about the Power Back of Us, they disappear one by one, and we learn to pray a new prayer: "Thy Kingdom has come."

MADE HIS OWN HELL

"None has understood you, but I understand you;
None has done justice to you, you have not done justice to yourself;
None but has found you imperfect, I only find no imperfection in you."—Walt Whitman.



FALSE teaching, and a mistaken idea of modesty, has given life many distressing vagaries that damn men's souls here, and carry them to their graves half done. I do not know that I ever witnessed a sadder sight than that of the life of a young man of sterling training in the science of metallurgy, a general favorite in social and what the world calls religious circles, and a master in the art of knowing how to do hard work. He was one of these "honor-bright" fellows—a man whose word was better than his bond—in whom everybody had confidence, for so far as any one knew, he did not have a vicious habit. But beneath the coat of the faithful church worker—behind the life of the man we knew as the acme of religious perfection—there stalked a hidden devil more vile than that of the libertine, and more thirsty for the man's life-blood than would have been the god of a thousand thousand leeches.

I knew the young man several years before the incident I am about to

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record for the first time. In all that time I never knew him to act anything but the gentleman. Faithful in the least and the greatest duties that were thrust upon him, he never wanted for an opportunity to do good unto others.

Imagine my horror when, one bright Monday morning, in the little mining camp where we were living, the newspaper gave this account of the young man's death: "This morning the camp was startled by the sad intelligence that T— C— had been drowned in the lake. The report was based upon the fact that a boat had been picked up on the beach containing the clothing of C—, together with bath towel, etc. The general supposition is that he was taking a swim in the lake late at night, as was his custom, using the boat as his dressing raft, and that he was taken with cramps in the chilly water. Thus will be explained the tragic ending of one of the noblest characters that ever has hit the camp. Honorable in all things, ever thoughtful and earnest in his conduct toward others; mindful always of their good, he sought relaxation in the cooling waters—and did not return. How the end came—where he took his last dive—will never be known, for he was alone, and it was late at night."

That was all. ¶ People do not express their sorrow or their sympathy in words, in one of these mining camps. They have a better way. And they went about their work after a few hours as if the sun had ever shone bright and warm. And there T— C— sleeps today. The lake is as deep as the mountains surrounding it are high. Below the surface of the

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water there is a current so strong as to draw the strongest swimmer down, and once a body gets into its icy grasp there is no escape. Down, down it is carried; how far nobody shall ever know, but far enough to be buried for ever and aye, for these waters never give up their dead. A mighty tomb, whose surface is as capricious as a woman's love, soothing as a mother's prayer; in calm not dead, in storm not mournful; ever majestic and beautiful—a fit resting place for a character like his.

¶ But there was one in that mining camp who knew something of the life of the young man that the young man did not dare tell and live. And yet he was mighty brave. A hero was he. He was a savior, but was not nailed upon the cross.

¶ Before taking his last swim in the cold waters of the lake, T—C— wrote briefly what he dared not make known and live. ¶ And he told it with his pen dipped in his life's blood. It was his last wish that the story of his life be made known. He gave his life that it might be published, and to me has fallen the painful duty of carrying out the wish of the man who counted it joy to lay down his life for his brethren.

I give the story as it was given me. It is the wail of a soul lost in the darkness of night, yet brave enough to speak the word of warning and sound the danger signal, and when this is done to stand face to face with his God and say: "Father, I did the best I could."

¶ He addressed himself to the "Church authorities, medical men, schoolmasters, parents, and those having the training of children throughout the world:

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"A lost, despairing soul, on the way to hell and destruction, wants a word with you ere he goes. Have you done your duty to the young under your charge, in instructing them about themselves? Have you told them of the horrors and dangers of self-abuse? And if not, why have you neglected your duty to those whom God has placed under your care?

"Let me tell you my history. My father died when I was only six years of age, and at eight I was placed in a large school near London, Eng., where this vice flourished unchecked all the time I was there, for over five years. Not a word of instruction ever came to those fatherless boys except from one gentleman, a man over fifty years of age, dressed in a silk hat and frock coat, who used to take great interest in the swimming performances. This villain, although possessed of a grown-up family of his own, used to secure the good wishes of the boys by his generosity and then, under the guise of his interest in swimming, used to teach them the awful practice which I dare not name again. As he was allowed to preach in the school chapel on some occasions, and was looked up to by everybody connected with the institution, what blame to the poor children that many have fallen under this terrible evil. ¶ A fine swimmer myself, I came directly under his notice, and his baneful influence has cost me not only my own life, but has wrecked and ruined many others, including the purest, sweetest girl that ever lived. I left the school a brilliant scholar at the head of the science classes, and winning a scholarship at the Government School of

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Mines at South Kensington. For three years I remained there, living at home meanwhile, where I had not the instruction of a single man resident. Since then I have always attended Divine services regularly and have been a Sunday-School and Bible Class attendant almost all the time, yet this subject, more important to the young even than the evils of the liquor traffic, has never been brought home to me by those whose duty I consider it was. My life has been moral in every other respect, for I have always guarded against the evils which have been pointed out to me, such as drinking, gambling and loose living, but how was I to know the awful fate that was in store for me?

“Oh, rouse to your duties in this matter! Ye churches, ye doctors, ye schoolmasters, ye Bible-class teachers, ye parents! The vice is hidden, and so all the more dangerous. It is thought to be natural by nearly all, though the voice of conscience tells them feebly that it is not right. ¶ Speak out! for the demons of hell are laughing at my helplessness! Away with false modesty: tell the young man of his danger ere it is too late; ere he is confronted with the insane asylum or the suicide’s grave.

“Just twenty-six years of age; in fine robust health, with every advantage that a young man could desire in business, social and religious circles, I find myself going to hell without anyone being the wiser; loved ones, and the girl I have won, soon to be filled with anguish and misery unspeakable because someone neglected his duty in the past.

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"On two occasions only I might have had the instruction which would have saved my body and soul, but on each I just missed it; my misfortune.

"For Christ's sake, speak out boldly. Don't hide the truth under a bushel. Let not the cry be from thousands of ruined boys and girls, 'Nobody ever has told me before.'

"I shall not die in vain if only one other be saved the awful agonies through which I have passed to my death, to be damned for ever. ¶ Shame forbids me to tell my name, so let me rest where the devil has placed me."

A sad story this. And yet, many might be told that are no more joyful. So bound up in the idea of "saving souls" for the imaginary heaven far away that they have not time to teach the boys and girls that to maintain a clean, moral life, and a shining countenance here and now is heaven, as much as it ever will be, and that to see God and be like Him it is only necessary for us to express Him in a natural way, in and through the work we do.

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO GOD.

"Man makes God in his own image."—Fra Elbertus.

LAST night the citizens of San Francisco went to their beds happy and contented with life and with themselves. This morning they were rudely awakened by an earthquake shock that tumbled them from their beds. Great massive buildings of cement and brick

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and steel and stone were twisted and torn, and their towers toppled and fell into the streets. The devastation was terrible enough, but it was nothing compared with the horrors of the fire that followed. Today the city of the Argonauts is in flames, and tomorrow will be in ashes. Three hundred thousand souls are made homeless, and the loss of property will amount to half a billion dollars. The awful experiences of those brave people will never be known. Hundreds were killed beneath falling walls; thousands were injured, and other thousands lost all they had but what they could save in a pillow-case. Their loss and their suffering was appalling.

America never witnessed anything like it in all her history, and the world few catastrophies that have compared with it in their devastation. Already we hear talk about "the hand of God," and He is blamed for all of it.

¶ Poor God!

When Mount Pelee belched lava, and wrought such destruction in the fertile valley over which it looks, and thousands of lives were lost, and millions of dollars' worth of property left in ruins, there was more talk about "the hand of God."

¶ Poor God!

When Vesuvius renewed her activities recently and wrought more havoc to the good people living near, when thousands were driven from their homes and left destitute, there was more talk about "the hand of God." ¶ Poor God! Aye, poor God!

It was ever thus!

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When we do not understand the cause of things we lay it to God. ¶ Every war, every great catastrophe, every horror that leaves the world in tears, and brings pain to the heart of humanity, is credited to God.

"He knows about it all; He knows; He knows!" Yes, dear heart; He knows.

But volcanic eruptions are as natural as sunshiny days, though not so frequent. They are like boils on the neck of mother earth, through which exudes that which she must throw off. The cause, according to the accessible facts, may be placed to the accumulation of steam or vapor deep down in the earth, and the throwing of lava and ashes is accounted for by the displacement of millions of tons of rock miles below the earth's surface.

And earthquakes, as is well known, are due to natural subterranean concussion. While the more violent, destructive shocks are not of frequent occurrence, except in localities where the earth's formation seems to be more easily affected, yet slight tremors are of surprising frequency, as is shown by the delicate instruments now in use. We speak of the earth as a *terra firma*, because we do not know any better. But the fact is, the earth is anything but a *terra firma*.

Why man should seek to lay all these horrible catastrophies up against God is beyond comprehension. Perhaps because man still believes that "God is a jealous God, and visits the sins of the fathers upon the children." And so when man creates sin for himself, and looks for God to get jealous, he expects Him to send punishment upon him.

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I wonder if God coaxed those people of Pompeii to build their city under the crater's mouth so He could run rivers of lava over them and bury them in hot ashes? ¶ I wonder if God decoyed the people up under the brow of Mount Pelee so they could be caught like rats in a trap and buried under tons of ashy sand? ¶ I wonder if God put greed into the hearts of men and induced them to erect these skyscraping buildings that they might topple over with the first heavy quake of the earth and start fires to wreak vengeance upon the thousands of poor unfortunates who never drew a cent of the immense profits. ¶ I wonder—but what is the use? ¶ “It is God’s will,” says man, and God does not deny the accusation.

But oh, dear me! What a shame! What a shame, that man will blindly go to the limit of reason in his mad groping for wealth and place and power, bringing destruction upon himself, and then blame God for the coming of the devastation. ¶ When we hear of such a horror as that which has befallen San Francisco, we feel sad, and tears of sympathy flow, but when we can take ourselves out of the hearing of the tolling church bells, the moans of the distressed, the cry of the hungry, and the sound of the praying priests, who thank God they are not as other men since they have been spared the destruction that has come to others; I say, when we can get out of hearing of these things, and draw close to Nature’s heart in the quiet of the forest of our own thoughts, we may hear the sweet lullaby of Her Mother Love as She draws the curtain upon all of it; and can feel the

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sorrow that is Hers because her children will bring pain upon themselves.

Poor children.

Poor God.

Poor Earth.

Poor Devil.

Next to the woman who does not gossip, the noblest work of God is the man who does not grouch.

You will find soft spots in this hard old world if you carry a cushion for your neighbor to sit upon.

The trouble with most men who have troubles, is that they look for an outward transformation without an inward illumination.

When we forget ourselves and speak the word fresh from the heart, we are liable to tell more of Truth than we knew we knew or could have imagined.

It is not fair to judge a man by his achievements. We can measure only his ability that way. The man the world thinks a failure often has in his heart grander motives than the man of wealth even could imagine.

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